Magister-Auctor Saga

The Learners Era

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Magister-Auctor Saga

The Learners Era

Idrissa Zourigrana

To Manuel, Sebastião
and Olívia

A new era?

Children in school, did that have to be for all children? Could it be for all children, or were some children deliberately kept out of school.
At the beginning of the twenty-first century AD, our 120th hectoyear, John, Jeanne, Paulo, Maria, Catherine and Joana, Anne, Sebastian, and Alan lived on the part of the planet then called Europe, in two now-vanished places called Oostende and Lisboa. In the world of that time, nation-states each developed their own rules regarding learning, school, and the status of children.

There were conflicting attitudes toward children who were attributed with learning difficulties. There were children who were said to have severe multiple disabilities… A simple, heterogeneous, pluralistic, and cosmopolitan view was asking too much. They were eager to divide. Declarations were adopted, such as that of Salamanca, to contain this division? Was that the key question? Apparently, it was when legal regulations were being drafted.

Lisboa was located in Portugal. The law stipulated that all children could attend a universal school. There were, however, special medical-pedagogical centres for children with more complex needs requiring intensive support. Children with severe multiple disabilities could thus attend a universal school where a multidisciplinary team cared for them. At least, on paper.

Oostende was located in Flanders, coincidentally also in Belgium. During that period, partly as a result of compulsory schooling instead of mandatory school, home-based education increased significantly, both in primary and secondary education. Home-based schooling was seen as an alternative for children and young people with severe multiple disabilities who would otherwise have ended up in certain welfare institutions.

In the Netherlands, a country bordering Belgium, youth services were available in and around schools. Teachers received support when dealing with children who adults claimed they exhibited behavioural or other developmental problems. Students with disabilities or mental health disorders received guidance and personal care in the classroom.

In Norway—even further north—exemption from compulsory school did not exist. All children, regardless of the nature and severity of their described disability, attended the nearest universal school. Within these schools, there were specific measures or support services for children with special educational needs. The former special education schools became centers of expertise that provided support to the universal schools.

Even Sweden, the then-neighbouring country of Norway, did not have an exemption from compulsory school. Children with what were considered severe multiple disabilities were usually enrolled in local universal schools, where they were placed in special classes for children with severe disabilities, with a specific curriculum.

Further east, then. In Poland, integrated classes in universal schools were the norm. Only children with profound intellectual disabilities attended special schools.
Other states were somewhat more lax. Hungary, for example. Although children with severe multiple disabilities were legally required to attend school, in practice they did not. They often stayed home or attended daycare centers and boarding schools.

In France, south of Belgium and north of Portugal, at the beginning of the 21st century AD, the education of children with severe multiple disabilities was still often the responsibility of special education schools. Exemption from compulsory school did not exist, and every child received a *personal education plan.* The implementation and evaluation of that plan was regularly

monitored by an educational team.
Southeastern Italy had a law for inclusion in universal education. Children with disabilities attended a universal school, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability diagnosed by adults. However, for those with severe multiple disabilities, there were special schools, usually run by private healthcare institutions.

In short, what one might call physical or psychological limitations of a biological nature seemed to receive specific attention in many nation states of that part of the world, expressed in different ways.

But the structures, ill-suited to childlike learning, often turned children into maladjusted. They were then assigned the most diverse descriptions, with the boundary between biologically psychic limitation and culturally ingrained deviation far from clear. The first half of the 21st century, our 120th hectoyear, called by many anthropogogues the Learner Era, was a period pregnant with diverse trends.

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This is the ninth book telling Alberto's family saga. Three women are prominently featured.
Joana and Catherine Demeester play the leading roles. In 2025 AD (120.25), they publish the first interpretable proposals regarding ignarometric analysis in the study of groups of people, whether in the form of a community, nation, or society.
The Demeester sisters are more interested in the relationships between people in various social contexts that are also learning environments, rather than in legally regulated school systems. Through her story about Catherine and Joana, Idrissa Zoungrana paints a picture of this era in which those in power control who will be subjected to which non-universal rules.

As the story progresses, Greta Campos takes over the lead role. After the death of her grandfather, Paulo, she begins with the help

of her cousin archiving both her grandfather's library and all the writings and publications related to ignarometric analysis in sociology.

Researchers associated with the *JCDSpace* generally consider Joana Demeester the last representative of the second Magister-Actor dynasty. As we will see in this and the next book of the saga, this is due to two factors: many Bibliopolis historians who study using ignarometric analysis today consider Joana the pivotal figure in further developing earlier attempts to connect arrogance and ignorance in determining ideal types or pure types of human behaviour toward its own species.

Later, it is Greta, daughter of Catherine and niece of Joana, who continues the anthropogogic nature of the dynastic line. This becomes clear once Greta begins cataloging the books and documents in Paulo Demeester's library.

Maria Liber
Bibliopolis, 122.25

Learning communities at school and beyond

The debate club

"Joana, are you ready?" Catherine calls from the stairs.
"I'm coming," answers her sister who was still experimenting with her new hearing aids. These are now so miniaturised that they fit inside the ear like a custom-made earplug.
She comes down the stairs, and the sisters walk to the bus stop together. As of today, they're back in the same school, now that Joana is starting lower senior and Catherine is in superior senior school.
"Did Dad also give you any advice when you moved on to high school?" Joana asks once they are on the bus.
Catherine laughs: "Be careful on the bus, on the street, at school, when you eat outside the cafeteria with your friends, you've probably heard all that too."
Joana sighs: "Yes, and also so I don't have to worry if I don't immediately understand something with papers, timetables, teachers."
Catherine notes: "Poor Dad, he's so foreign sometimes. I heard him tell Mom that he has a hard time imagining our school life because he used to cycle or walk to school in a small town, and there were fewer students than at our school."
Joana giggles: "He sometimes looks a little lost. But he's a sweetheart. He told me yesterday that, just like you, I have permission to leave school at lunchtime, but that I always have to tell you where I'm going. Apparently, you weren't supposed to tell anyone what you did at lunchtime."
Catherine hugs her sister. "That's because I'm the big sister and you're the little sister," she laughs. She looks at her phone, where a new message just arrived, and says, "Great! We have two new boys

in class. I can't wait to meet them!"
When they get off the bus, Joana's friend is waiting for her. They have an appointment with their class principal. Together, they go to the staffroom where they are kindly greeted. The teacher explains that the role of class principal for first-year students in high school is usually assigned to those who spend more time with the class. She teaches math and science, so they will have a lesson with her almost every day. Joana explains that when she registered, it was agreed that she would have a seat in the classroom where she could easily observe the teacher's face, and that her friend would sit next to her to support her. She explains lipreading is an important support for her. The principal believes everything will go smoothly and that Joana shouldn't hesitate to contact her if she needs mediation with a teacher. Reassured, the girls go out onto the playground, where they see old friends from their previous school and meet new classmates. In the distance, Joana sees her sister, who is talking animatedly with a boy, perhaps one of those two new faces, she thinks.

A few days later, the sisters and some friends walk down the avenue to one of their favourite sandwich shops. Catherine introduces Steven Bird to her sister and her friend. He's the boy Joana saw her talking to on the first day and is indeed one of the two new additions to her class. His father is in diplomatic service and worked at a British consulate in Brazil until last year, but has now been appointed to the embassy here in Lisbon. Steven is very happy about this. In the Brazilian metropolis, he wasn't allowed to move around freely. He was always driven to a private school. His parents now have a house near the public high school, so now he can simply walk there and hang out with friends after school in the nearby parks or by the river. Joana and her friend immediately take a liking to him. He has a funny British-Brazilian accent that Catherine can imitate very well. Steven dreams of becoming a

professional pilot. He earned his solo glider pilot's license in Brazil last year.
The young people walk back to school together and agree to make their joint visit to the sandwich shop a weekly activity.

That afternoon, the high school students' debate club is organising a discussion as part of a series on international cooperation. Catherine is a member of the club and has already invited her father to the final club activity of the current school year as a guest speaker on international cooperation in education.
Today, Hypolite d'Ailleurs will share his experiences as a consultant for solidarity economy initiatives.
Joana convinces her sister to attend the debate afternoon. About ten other students show up, and they sit together in a large circle. Both sisters are very enthusiastic about Hypolite's stories, who begins with the question: "How long does it take you to get from home to school?"
The answers vary, of course. Catherine says it takes them longer if they take the bus: about twenty minutes. "But if one of our parents drives us, it takes ten minutes," she adds. One of the colleagues easily needs half an hour. It only takes him twenty minutes to get home, as then it's downhill. He lives closer to the school, but he walks.
"Twenty minutes by bus, twenty minutes or an half an hour on foot downhill," Hypolite replies. "You know how far someone can walk in twenty minutes?" Catherine's colleague says he checked it on a map: he lives about two kilometers from the school.
"That's pretty much correct," says Hypolite. "On a flat road or path, someone can walk about five kilometers per hour without much effort." He looks at Catherine and continues, "Ten minutes by car… That's maybe eight to ten kilometers. On foot, it would take you about two hours along the same road. Okay. Do you know anything about São Tomé?"

“That’s an island off the African coast,” says one of the young people. “It used to belong to Portugal.”

“Belong to…” says Hypolite. “Hmm, yes. Portuguese explorers set foot on it. The island was uninhabited at the time. No one was particularly interested in settling there, but after Brazil’s occupation, traders found it useful to use the island as a stopover for ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean south of the equator. So the government of those times banished undesirables to São Tomé and the island became permanently inhabited. These were often Jewish families, expelled from Catholic Portugal. And to continue: do you know what a roça is?”

There is a moment of silence, and then someone says, “Isn’t that some kind of plantation?”

“Something like that,” Hypolite continues. “Soon, the permanent settlers from Portugal brought slaves from Africa to establish sugar cane and cocoa plantations. But the slaves stayed quite close to their countries of origin, and there were many uprisings. Gradually, Portuguese, and later other European traders, preferred to source their products from Brazil after exporting slaves there. São Tomé became a transit port. Later, during the last century, demand for certain tropical products increased significantly: coffee, sugar, cocoa. In São Tomé, the plantations were revived, primarily for cocoa and coffee. The Portuguese owners continued to use primarily black slaves, who later became a kind of serfs. They lived in very poor conditions on the Roça, the plantation. Since the Carnation Revolution in 1974, São Tomé and the neighbouring island of Príncipe have been independent, but many people still live in very difficult circumstances.

A few years ago, I spent a few months intermittently at the Roça Àgua Izé. I met project leader Hipólito Santos there.”

There’s laughter and Hypolite joins in. “Yeah, I know, we became a kind of *Dupont* and *Dupond* from Tintin: Hipólito and Hypolite. The project leader had been invited a few years earlier to help launch a

crazy project in a Roça annex, a project conceived by people who rarely visit sites. At the time, covering 16 kilometers of a nearly nonexistent path took three hours in an all-terrain vehicle, the speed of a pedestrian on a flat road. Hipólito was part of an international group of consultants. They were commissioned to help establish sustainable small businesses in record time, at the request of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) funded by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

After experiencing the lives of the people there, he felt that this was an impossible demand. But he was almost alone in his conviction. He distanced himself from the project and explained to the local UNDP director what he believed was necessary. The women of the local communities had to be fully involved in the project, something that wasn't at all the case in the proposal, even though they did most of the plantation work. They were also the ones who spent most of their time in the Roça units.

"And was that possible?" asks Catherine.

"He discussed it at length with the small group of people he works with here. I had just arrived from France and was included in that team. We thought we could set up a more affordable program that would involve not only that part of the Roça, but other areas as well. We proposed directly to the UNDP and the ILO that delegations of three women from five different parts of the Roça could be brought together for short periods over a two-year period to conduct participatory action research, in a consciousness-raising learning community. We believed it was possible:

- to empower a core of enterprising women to intervene in collective life;
- to create a collective feeling of being able to build a better future;
- to have five annexes work together to find common solutions;
- to develop economic, social and cultural inter-community projects;
- to provide women with access to credit, as they would take initiative and be better aware of their rights;

- to see the emergence of small businesses set up by women, men and young people in the medium term.

And that's what ultimately happened: three years after our intervention began, some forty small socio-economic initiatives emerged, providing more than fifty people with new income. Four women' s associations were formed, providing self-financing. A total of 150 women were involved in the participatory action-research. The development of the local technical team, which, along with community representatives, gradually learned to use collective self-evaluation tools, was crucial. They became skilled at effectively adjusting their interventions and better incorporating what the local community itself taught them about local development."

"Is that only what you experienced yourselves, or do others say that too?" asks one of the young listeners.

"That's a good question," says Hypolite. "At the end of 2001, you could read the following in the official reports of the specialists from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the UNDP (the United Nations Development Programme): '*The results were far exceeded as a result of the work with women, namely the intention to create real communal societies from groups of plantation workers who, accustomed to poverty and passivity, previously gave up easily*' and '*The lives of the people of the five communities that have benefited from the railway rehabilitation have improved significantly. However, it is the women who have benefited most so far, because, from a disadvantaged position, they have managed to gain self-confidence (self-esteem) and are now dynamic entrepreneurs"*. Those specialists themselves say that it is undeniable that 'the ILO methodology' should be expanded. But that last point is a non-binding statement, which will probably remain non-binding forever."

"Isn't that also an easy to give?" Joana asks somewhat shyly.

Hypolite looks at her for a long time before replying: "That's a very pertinent comment, young lady! And it's very difficult to answer. I

prefer to speak about what experience has taught me. The money-oriented and greedy individuals in our society talk a lot about how they can 'help poor peoples and regions develop', but they only have their own model in mind. And they know full well that this model rests on people they exploit. So their concern is hypocritical. And they know it too. I've been kicking up shins with those I work with for several years now, and sometimes that has had local results, as with the strategy we used here. I prefer to be cautious about what I call the money laundering of the good capitalist. I also take the same approach to those movements that call themselves alternative, concerned with providing cheap technology to those who don't yet have it, but aren't interested in truly sustainable technological solutions for the entire planet."

Steven then asks: "But what exactly does such action-research consist of?"

"It boils down to the fact that, as a technician, you carefully seek to identify all the options that will determine the success of the intervention you're going to participate in. And that can vary greatly from project to project. In the example I gave, we were tasked with guiding the population of Roça districts toward sustainable microeconomic activities. After initial contact with the population, my almost-namesake understood that subsidised investment should be avoided as much as possible as long as there was no community awareness to guide that investment properly. He further noted that the strict division of roles between men and women meant that the women knew much better than the men how to manage the subsistence economy of the Roça community. But getting the women to speak up and be heard isn't easy in a community where men traditionally hold the floor. And in this case, they had no economic knowledge whatsoever, not even about their own subsistence economy. So, we carefully developed a proposal to bring together a few women from each of the Roça's annexes in its main building, with the aim of sharing experiences. They would be

guided by a small team of primarily women and one or two men. This team was skilled in leading discussion groups and possessed the necessary technical expertise in subsistence economics, agricultural management, micro-enterprises, and community development. Breaks were scheduled during the meetings so that we could guide and encourage the participants to gather information each time they returned to the annex, based on the questions that arose during the exchanges, thus preparing for each subsequent learning opportunity."

"So they're doing some kind of project," asks Joana.

"That's pretty much what it boils down to," Hypolite answers. "And for it to remain their project, all those highly specialised technicians know they must be able to keep quiet, listen, and clarify connections, all with the goal of helping people think, propose plans, analyse, and reformulate them."

Catherine looks at the teacher who's part of the club: "Our biology teacher says his job is to help us learn how to think about how to plan a project and what techniques to use. Is that the same thing?"

The teacher is a little surprised by the question, and then says slowly "Yes… somewhat, I would say."

Provocatively, Hypolite says: "Only your biology teacher?"

Steven then says with a twinkling eye: "Most teachers are highly specialised technicians who can't keep their mouths shut and have difficulty listening, I would say."

Everyone laughs, including the supervising teacher, who says, "I don't teach Steven's class, so I don't know if he's putting me in the group of techies who don't keep their mouths shut. But I thought Catherine's question was interesting." She then turns to Hypolite, "You know, there's a teaching model known as *Institutional Pedagogy*. There are teachers, especially in primary school, who encourage their students to structure their work environment through and for the sake of their projects. Your example reminded me of this."

Hypolite nods: “We use Institutional Analysis as a starting point. This helps us, together with the people, develop goals, rules, and structures that ensure the sustainability of their project. So we work ‘instuting’ and that seems to be the case for the teachers you mentioned as well.”
At the end of the conversation, Catherine asks Hypolite to let her have his contact information. He gives her the address and phone number of the small consulting firm he works with. He adds the firm itself is legally constituted as a cooperative.

Catherine and Joana excitedly report to their parents what Hypolite told them. Joana immediately adds that Hypolite’s story about working with those women there in São Tomé reminded her of her primary school days. Joana then asks if her parents had heard about the *Institutional Pedagogy*. She is quite impressed when she hears from Maria that her grandfather John knew one of the founders, Fernand Oury, quite well and that her father once interned with him.
Paulo notes that the strategy Hypolite d’Ailleurs told the children about is ultimately the same approach his sister uses with the reading and writing groups. He finds this very interesting. He sees here, once again, the connection between Paulo Freire’s dialogical approach, learning communities, and institutional groups within school and classroom.

From this point on, Joana becomes increasingly involved in the debate club. Catherine is happy that her sister will be able to take over the reins when she finishes secondary school. Just before begins the exam period of that school year, the club has its last activity for the season. As agreed, Paulo Demeester is the guest. Steven introduces him with the following words: “Two of our regular participants asked me to introduce Paulo with something other than ‘*And here we have the father of two of our participants, Joana and Catherine*’, so I won’t say that. What can I say about

Paulo? He's from Belgium and has traveled and worked in various European countries before settling here in Portugal. Currently, he's one of three managers of a work and thinking space they call a learning laboratory. They work with anyone who comes along and is interested in learning together. He also writes for various newspapers and magazines. He often talks about the convivial or happy society. Paulo, I'd like to start with this. Can a society be happy?"

"That happy thing comes from the Dutch title of a book by Ivan Illich: *Naar een nieuwe levensstijl: voorwaarden voor gelukkiger samenleven (Towards a new lifestyle: conditions for happier coexistence)*. The English title *Tools for Conviviality* could also be interpreted as *Tools for Cosiness.* Illich provocatively invites us to reflect on how we often unconsciously allow ourselves to be led into a particular society where, because we have money, we can acquire goods and a lifestyle. He suggests, in a sense, that we can emulate the successful model of a local society worldwide, where everyone can consume according to their own desire and in an individual way."

"And according to him — and if I understand correctly, you follow him in this — that is not the path to that happy society?"

"It may very well be the path to happiness for some individuals, but not for everyone living together. There are several obstacles. In this societal model, consuming firstly means having money. Furthermore, in a consumerist society, individual happiness is a vague concept: to what extent is that individual happiness an illusion, foisted on you by those who foist products on you? Thirdly, in a consumerist society, this kind of individual happiness often leads to the disappearance of collective resources. Group ties are lost such as jointly providing a certain infrastructure, sometimes they disappear, or simply encounter misunderstanding if this is not discussed."

"Can you give examples?" asks one of the young people present.

“A good example is the pressure on consumers to switch from a collective facility to a strictly individual phone for distance calls. Since the full-scale adoption of cellular phones, the number of public phone booths has been steadily declining. Moreover, there’s much less, let’s say, social concern, in the sense of collectively caring for these public phones. They lose their purpose and meaning, and so there’s no longer any social control. If they break or disappear, no worries, we have our individual phone. The same applies to the home phone: instead of a single phone that needs to be managed collectively, each member of the household has its own one. This, of course, generates much more revenue for the companies that manage subscriptions or prepayments, and moreover, these days these are mostly private, not public, companies. Not only does the personal phone give the owner the false impression of being able to reach the entire world at all times, but it also makes the owner, in a sense, a slave to that world. You no longer have an excuse not to answer, and meanwhile, your communication options increasingly depend on the money everyone pays for them.”

“No cell phones then?”

“It’s not a black-and-white proposition. But the question I’m posing is what we actually want? Should everyone be instantly accessible, everywhere and at all times? And if so, why? Is it because we’re led to spend some of our time in an uninteresting work environment and can bask in the knowledge that we can exchange text messages at any moment with someone who isn’t there but with whom we’d like to be? Consuming individuals are the precondition for an economic society based on the sale of products. This requires us to have money, which in turn requires us to sell our own labour. In a sense, we’re still slaves to those who control their wealth on a large scale.”

To which Catherine says, “Is that why you always suggest using shared facilities?”

“For me, it’s not just a matter of using our inventions rationally. Imagine for a moment that, just as we’ve gradually replaced trains with individual cars over the past hundred years, we’re now also replacing group transportation by boat or plane with individual planes and boats. I call that consumer madness. But what I find far worse is that by replacing everything we can use together with objects for individual use, we’re also weakening social cohesion. We’re simply becoming more individualistic.”

“But isn't that just trying to swim against the current?” asks Steven.

“I’d rather say I’m looking how I can stand on the margins and see what happens. Ivan Illich comes to the simple conclusion that if we let ourselves be seduced by individual consumption and then shout that everyone has the same right to ever more consumption, the planet will perish. When I was about your age, we read the *Club of Rome Report* which already warned us about such a possible scenario. Eight years ago the Lisbon Group repeated this warning with their book *Limits to competition*.”

Joana says: “Some of us learned in primary school to consult with each other, work on projects together, and use classroom supplies collectively. I know my friends from other schools were very surprised that we didn’t have our own pencils, markers, rulers, etc., but that we simply bought what we needed together as a class.”

Paulo replies: “Yes, and all the parents agreed to have the class manage a small sum of money together. That’s not only more efficient, but also cheaper than giving every parent a list of what they needed to buy for their child. But you see, that also goes against the rule of individual consumerism. I know from experience that these days, it’s not even allowed in official schools to let children use a real classroom fund. Yet, lessons are imposed on them to learn how to handle fictitious money, lessons sponsored by banks. And of course, they use individual purchases and credit rules as guidelines.”

The accompanying teacher notes that Paulo’s words resemble some

remarks Hypolite d'Ailleurs made a while ago about the action-research that involves people in regional and job development. Paulo laughs and says he received a detailed report of that conversation and that he greatly admires Hypolite: “He’s an active consultant, and he also has strong international connections with the people he works with. My experience is minimal, as is my knowledge.” He laughs: “Perhaps that’s why I’m now part of a supervising team in the learning laboratory. I’m the kind of consultant. Because I can’t manage to achieve what I’d like to see achieved I encourage others to do so. I think I learn as much or more in the learning laboratory than the people who visit the laboratory. Recently, we’ve been participating in similar initiatives in several countries that are part of the PISA research group and publish comparative studies on the performance of their school systems. We connected because some of the PISA reports referred to such learning communities, so to speak. It’s comforting to know that there are still people who stand on the margins and share for reflection what they observe.”

“Does that also have practical consequences?” someone else asks.

“Well, we have succeeded in drawing more attention to the importance of experimentation. Carl Sagan said something about this that caught my attention. Experimentation, he said, is to work with mind *and* hands; to experiment, you have to do concrete things. In a slave economy, studying through experimentation was out of the question; only slaves worked with their hands. Even natural phenomena were simply somethings you had to think and philosophise about. A philosopher who tried things out could even be looked at askance. Modern scientists leave little doubt about the necessity of testing thoughts and hypotheses through experiments and observation. But in school, there’s little experimentation, few projects are undertaken to effectively investigate anything. Schools still work with masters and slaves…”

There’s laughter.

Then Paulo says: “With initiatives, such as *La main à la pâte (Hands-on)* inspired by Nobel Prize winner Charpak, we emphasise the need to transform the classroom into a learning community. Throughout human history, experimentation has been recognised as an important part of learning, and learning itself has only recently become a reality. Yet, ministries of education worldwide prefer primary and even secondary schools with taught knowledge, rather than allowing children and young people to try things out and discuss them. But a school can organize itself as a learning community. In various European countries, I have regularly participated in learning communities myself. I have found that the person in charge of a group is also considered a learner when they see themselves not as a speaking encyclopedia, but as a facilitator. In a learning community, everyone can learn, depending on their own starting point and place within the community. Working in group then becomes cooperation again, and that is very interesting from a human perspective.”

“But a teacher knows more than a student,” says one of Catherine’s classmates.

“That’s not an absolute given,” Paulo replies. "Of course, a math teacher has a greater working knowledge of those parts of the language of mathematics that are included in the curriculum than a beginning student. And the teacher can put that ready knowledge to use in various ways. In the learning lab and similar initiatives, we assume that the most interesting thing is to set up a project with the children where, under supervision, they gradually master the mathematical aspects of the problem in this example. But I can certainly imagines problem formulation going beyond the teacher’s ready knowledge, and that doesn’t seem to be a problem. I once saw children in primary school formulate a problem for the LOGO turtle…”

Paulo looks around questioningly and sees that about half the group shows signs of recognition, while the other half doesn’t know what

he's talking about. Who's ever experimented with the LOGO programming explains quickly explain what it's about.

Paulo then resumes: "It was a logical problem that teacher didn't have the knowledge to translate into programming language. I was fascinated to see how the children and the teacher worked together to create several small program modules and systematically have the turtle execute them, gradually achieving the desired result. The teacher's knowledge was also useful in going over basic operations with negative numbers with the children and using the logics of a double negation. For me, that's a learning community for learning to become human, regardless of each person's position in the group."

Catherine then asks: "Does that mean that as young people we should remember that humanity is better served by cooperation than by obtaining the best possible individual exam scores?"

Paulo nods. "Ideally, yes, I'd say. But we live in a world of hierarchy and rankings, and in that world, you also need to know what exam results you need to be able to start the further education you've set your sights on. Unfortunately, it's not enough to simply say you're interested in this or that; you also have to compete with others to get into this or that program. And that jeopardises any cooperation if the group isn't sharp thinking enough. And even a sharp thinking group can be crushed by those who turn learning into a huge commercial enterprise."

"What are you trying to say?" asks Steven.

"I'll give you an example of a completely different international example of collaboration not of cooperation. My father gave me to read about ten years ago the white paper *Teaching and Learning* from the European Commission. And two years ago I received as a gift the booklet *Tableau Noir (Blackboard)* by Gérard de Sélys and Nico Hirtt. The authors' analysis of the white paper and what's happening in adult education indicates that the education market has become a multi-million dollar industry. That means increasing

problems for those who encourage formal cooperative learning communities or informal learning sessions. They are desperately trying to transform group work into paid self-instruction, with ever-increasing tuition fees at universities or distance learning courses. In addition, everyone is constantly being told that one has to stand up for themselves and be as competitive as possible to achieve what one wants. I once had a pedagogy teacher who argued that as long as we use a money-based social model, cooperation can never fully develop."

Joana then asks: "But is it possible to maintain in the margins, in a cooperative or solidarity movement?"

Paulo then says: "Cooperative and solidarity movements are not only the driving force for a more humane world but also for a more ecologically sustainable environment. It is the answer to destructive individualism and the murderous lust for power. It is the difference between common use and individual ownership. And that can happen everywhere. Before the invention of nation-states, or the Nations, by whom the hierarchy from the time of nobility and kings was sought to be preserved, the concept of international cooperation did not exist. The concept *international* only makes sense if you first understand the concept *national.* The entire solidarity approach is therefore a kind of cooperative response to the merciless attack by those who take the arrogance of the majority's rightness too far."

Steven then says: "So NGOs like *Doctors Without Borders*, Cure Violence, Oxfam, Amnesty International are organisations on a global level that have a kind of cooperative basis?"

Paulo says: "You are mainly talking about organisations that have united across national borders. Do these associations work *with* or *for* the other people? A subtle but important difference, as Paulo Freire would say. To my knowledge the recently founded *Cure Violence* aims to act as a kind of consultant to analyse and combat violence in communities. However, it's not yet clear to me whether

its members take matters into their own hands or cooperate with the communities they intervene in. I'm thinking more along the lines of networks of organisations. As long as the members of an association continue to rely on cooperation and critical thinking, I believe such networks are the response I was referring to. We, here, can more easily make choices than those who have to endure totalitarian regimes. But regardless, those who choose to work cooperatively on the margins of any system must be aware that by the simple fact of acting that way they also choose to be potentially misunderstood, earn less, and experience aggression from ignorant or non-ignorant arrogant individuals. This can take the form of accusation, attempted bribes or recuperation but also violence, persecution, and even torture or murder. So it's certainly important to determine together how far each person in a local group or network of groups is willing to go without disrupting cooperation. Cooperation without very well-organised communication seems impossible to me…"

Paulo concludes his chat by giving everyone a copy of what he refers to a chart from his grandfather Louis. It lists of personality types based on their level of arrogance and ignorance. He couldn't have imagined how crucial this sheet of paper would become for both of his daughters for the rest of their lives.

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Two years later, Catherine finishes high school and is in college. Joana is still a member of the debate club. At the suggestion of Hypolite d'Ailleurs she and two classmates, have invited friend of him, Priest Martim Sobreiro dos Campos for a conversation about faith, superstition, and religion. Hypolite has prepared something for Joana. Father Martim is a Jesuist. When Joana asks what that means, Hypolite explains that Jesuism is a movement within Christianity that considers Jesus the highest authority. The followers attempt to restore Jesus' sayings to their most original

form and purify them of the changes introduced by the Gospels. This is, of course, no easy task, Hypolite adds. The Jesuists are not opponents of the Christian Bible or church doctrine, but simply consider these to have no authority over Jesus' teachings. You could call it a kind of rejection of the theology attributed to Paul.

Joana introduces Father Martim: "We have a friend of a friend visiting us today. Those who have been following the debate club for a while know I remember two years ago we had Hypolite d'Ailleurs' visit, who spoke to us about the role of women in development projects. He suggested I invite Father Martim for a conversation about the church, faith, religion, and power. We thought that would be a good idea. Father Martim, Hypolite explained to me that you acknowledge the Jesuism movement. You are trying to restore Jesus' sayings and teachings. I read part of *The gospel according to Jesus Christ* by José Saramago. Is Saramago a Jesuist?

Father Martim laughs and says: "What a wonderful opening question, Joana. First of all, I must say I'm delighted to be invited by a group of young people to a conversation that isn't easy to have in our society. I'd say we should ask Saramago if he considers himself a Jesuist. Is he an atheist, an agnostic? The book you mentioned is a beautiful and highly critical novel. You understand from it that Saramago has closely studied the figure of Jesus, but also the way he has been, let's say, abused over the centuries. Some of the novel's passages perhaps offer better insight into the figure of Jesus than long passages from the Gospels. Personally, I find him quite sharp at times, but perhaps that's necessary to awaken people from their stupor. I just finished a book by a figure I think is even more difficult to place, Fernando Dragó. He published two years ago *Letter of Jesus to the Pope*, in which he has Jesus sharply denouncing the excesses of the church and its bishops. Sometimes, as a Jesuist, I appreciate the prose of both authors; sometimes, as a deeply religious believer, I feel that they strip the Mystery of

superstition and religious manifestations, but because of their agnostic stance, consciously or unconsciously, still question its elusiveness. In his book, Dragó has the Jesus figure said something like this about the church: *"I never told Simon Peter, a fisherman with a sharp knife and a strong face, to become the chief priest and grand rabbi of the synagogue of my teaching. It was all the invention of a fellow countryman of mine named Saul. He later changed his name. To my knowledge, I never met him myself. He thought otherwise; he boasted that he had seen or felt me during the accident he suffered when his horse reared up before the gate of a fortified city."* This kind of sarcastic humor is of course very hurtful."

"And with whom among the Jesuits can we think about church, religion and faith in a more religious context?" asks Joana's friend.

"There is a Jesuit among us who is now quite well known and who wrote the book as a kind of cry for help. *Fátima Nunca Mais (Fatima Never Again)* is the name of the book. Perhaps you've already heard about its author Priest Mário Pais de Oliveira, precisely because he's so critical of the Church but also of those who abuse the Christian faith for their own interests. He also published *Neither Adam nor Eve, nor Original Sin (Nem Adão e Eva, Nem Pecado Original)*; *What should we do with this Church (Que fazer com esta Igreja)*; *In Memory of Them, Book of Women (Em Memória Delas, Livro de Mulheres)* and *And God said: what I like is politics, not religion (E Deus disse: do que eu gosto é de política, não de religião)*. Reading him is a real pleasure for me. Of course, *small viewers* and ignorant people blame him for statements like "*How can a universal God be a God with a chosen people?"*. But the Universal God is not a God of exceptions and condemnations."

"If I understand correctly, you are making a distinction between religion and faith?" asks one of the young people present.

"You can look it up in a synonym dictionary. For *faith* you get judgment, principle, concept, idea, standpoint, direction, opinion, option, disposition, conviction, feeling, trust. For *religion* get,

doctrine, conviction, confession,, church doctrine, religious denomination, piety, belief, creed. Personally, I would connect the words slightly differently, but you could say that faith and religion are different things. And as Father Mario de Oliveira puts it, religious manifestations are more or less idolatrous manifestations but they are not manifestations of faith. And that has everything to do with the transcendence of God. Also according to Father Mario de Oliveira, our TV and newspapers suffer from a huge lack of understanding of Christian theology. They know a lot about football and a little less about just one particular type of economy—the neoliberal one—but with a few honourable exceptions, they know nothing about Christian theology."

"But shouldn't one's faith be supported by religion or by religious texts?" someone else asks.

"Father Mário says something very simple about this: evangelising begins where Christianising ends. He writes, somewhere that '*The basic texts of the New Testament do not speak of a new religion, but of a path open to us, not to God alone, but to the other, to others, to those who are not our flesh and blood, and even to those we consider enemies; to gradually establish a relationship of brotherhood and sisterhood. When this is effectively achieved, then and only then the God of Jesus is honoured and worshipped'*. Regarding the texts making the Canon of the Roman Catholic Church, Dragó's Jesus figure says in his letter to Pope Wojtyla: *'I suppose it is nothing new to you, that startling news that the Holy Spirit disguised himself a second time as a bird when the prelates of the nascent church at Nicaea were debating what would eventually become the Dogma, the Canon. Without breaking or staining the glass of any of the windows in the walls of the chamber where the council was being held, he placed himself on the shoulder of each of the assembled bishops and whispered into their venerable ears the titles of the Scriptures that must be considered Sacred. [We know of no parrots or parakeets in that place at that time…] Why? Because we know of no dove, now or then, that can express itself in Latin or Greek. So many*

things, Lord, so many things.'

People's faith is something personal, something that comes from within. Connecting that personal faith with the faith of others—and think of all the synonyms the word has—makes the world a common dwelling place. Dragó's figure of Jesus says about this: '*The earth, I said. Wojtyla. Or the microcosm, the populated, the dense, the charged world, if you want to be metaphysical, refined, pedantic, and Californian. But never say, as the Bible says, the valley of tears. That is, within Christianity, the dark and heavy legacy of the Jewish religion, which is mistaken in this (as in everything): there is no reason for so much pessimism.*' I also believe there is no room for pessimism. The millennium that is now beginning is that of science. The more science we have, the less need we have for religion. But to make science ours, we need all of us, together, to replace the current oppressive societal model with one in which there is no place for oppressors."

"Isn't that very utopian?" asks one of the students. "Isn't that precisely why people want God's presence, why they want to see him as the one who will solve everything for those who follow him?"

"That's the easy solution. God is not a magician, no matter how much people would like to think he appears to those who have visions. Father Mário, who has been critically examining Fátima for years, writes about the falseness of those who think this way about God: '*At a congress about Fatima, in Fatima, not a single congressperson had the clarity and courage to say that, at least for Christian theology, apparitions and visions of God, Our Ladies and saints are absolutely impossible. Consequently, they could not have occurred in Fatima either. It is the task of science to explain and debunk these phenomena called visions and apparitions, since they are neither. Meanwhile, it is the duty of Christian theology to say that God has never resorted, nor will ever resort, to such tricks to induce humanity to recognise Him and cooperate with Him.* Wanting to penetrate as deeply as possible into Jesus'

message, the Jesuits examine the texts that led to the Gospels. Jesus doesn't speak of a God, but of a father, a father who is everyone's father. That's interesting. Father Mário says that even Jesus doesn't see God. But, he continues: '*John, a disciple of Jesus, says: if anyone says he loves God whom he cannot see, and does not love his brother whom he can see, he is a liar and the truth is not in him*'. So you might wonder who will free us from these apparitions and visions. Shouldn't it be the churches? No, says Father Mário, they don't; they've become multinational corporations that prefer to continue profiting from the visions and apparitions. He adds that many are inclined to do business in the name of God. The Church of Rome, of course, but the new churches are also true commercial enterprises. And yet people seek them out. They are conditioned to look for those who offer them solutions instead of developing solutions themselves. An apparition is good, a miracle even better. Fernando Dragó has his Jesus figure say: '*I didn't say I appear, but that I manifest myself. These are philosophically quite different things, no matter how much the dictionary and the common people confuse them. What appears, Wojtyla,* ***appears*** *to be but* ***is*** *not. What manifests itself, however,* ***is,*** *although this is not always the case. Especially in matters of the Spirit.'*

You could call apparitions and visions techniques for disinformation. I mentioned Fatima, and I'll talk about it later. Fatima is a textbook example of this disinformation. It starts with the message itself. Frei Bento Domingos says about this: '*Is the message sent in accordance with the Good News, or does it have more to do with the preaching of John the Baptist in the Old Testament? Does the message have anything to do with the transformation that resulted from the announcement that the Kingdom of God is already among us?'*

Father Mário goes a step further. He naturally makes the analysis that others have already made about the historical moment in which the apparitions of Fatima occur, which he calls *Fatima 1.0*. But isn't it a shame today, I might add, that the Church has turned

it into a paramedical, or should I say, a paranormal medical spectacle? Father Mário is referring to the World Day of the Sick and the television report surrounding it: '*A televised interview with a long-bedridden paralysed person who can now stand up thanks to Jacinta's miracle, without the doctors not knowing how to explain it. It was worth Jacinta's intervention... but what kind of God is he who only answers the cries of the poor and sick when they have good lawyers who arrange everything and put in a good word, always accompanied by large sums of money for recognised sanctuaries where the images of his lawyers can be worshipped? Isn't that a demonic God?*" That's the God fabricated by those in power. The only sane response anyone can have to this is to become an atheist."

Joanna then asks, "You've already explained that apparitions and visions don't belong in a religious experience, but that they're a kind of superstition linked to religion. Does that mean that miracles don't exist either?"

Father Martim smiles: "Religions thrive on events that astonish the ignorant or the gullible. But again, that has little to do with faith. Regarding Fatima, Frei Bento Domingos asks: '*Are the apparitions not a skilful montage, a kind of time-bound pastoral parable for popular taste, intended to catechise a population that would otherwise not be catechised?*' And that's a kind way of describing Fatima. Father Mário Pais de Oliveira uses the word in the sense of her impossibility and is ironic: '*A miracle? Who knows whether the time has not come when many who have chosen Fatima are about to go and live there to embrace and practice this Gospel, just as the poor already do? Who knows whether they will not ultimately realise that, like the poor, they must divest themselves of all the heritage that has accumulated, even in Fatima, on the basis of land bought at a low price? A dream? No, rather, the greatest miracle that Mary of Nazareth, the mother of the poor, wants to bring about in Fatima*'."

Priest Martim's smile widens: "Do you understand? What he's really saying is that miracles don't exist. Those who have power through

accumulated wealth won't relinquish it except through long introspection, something the worshippers of gold usually arrogantly reject."

"But that would mean that anyone who sells miracles is actually committing some kind of abuse of power simply to be able to continue to wield that power," one of Joanna's classmates remarks in surprise.

"*Ergo*. Such church officials use, I would say, abuse the poor image they created of God. And they do it shamelessly. In Fatima, they used three small children. I quote Frei Bento Domingos again: '*Lucia is the only survivor. What about her life? Doesn't it seem as if Lucia was condemned? And the two other children who died prematurely? Even Our Lady of Fatima, whom so many people continue to ask monthly to be freed from their ailments, didn't help them.*.' Father Mário Oliveira sees Lucia's confinement in a convent on the orders of the bishops of the time as a kidnapping, which led to her being banished forever. He concludes: '*It's not hard to understand why she lives in an almost constant state of delirium. What's most astonishing is that even the Pope in Rome, many cardinals, and almost all the bishops of Portugal take her seriously. A sign that major interests are at stake…*' Those who examine the history of the power of the Roman Church in Europe, the Church whose leaders legitimised kings and emperors, often point to the way in which the early Church Fathers themselves decided what should be considered true in the religion they constructed to guide people's faith in a direction they desired. In his essay, Dragó has the figure of Jesus say: '*All the members of this fierce and ill-equipped legion of writers and researchers know as well as you that none of the texts attributed to Luke, Mark, Matthew, and John were written by John, Matthew, or Luke, and they know equally well that the supposed historiographical sources about my life, at the time of their conception and annotation, were as old as the facts being unearthed and recounted. Imagine, Holly Father, my son, how many interests were at stake, and draw the pertinent conclusions from*

it..' There are certainly interests at stake in an institutionalised institution such as the Church."

"And according to you, the Church here does the same by using Our Lady of Fatima?" asks another student.

"Yes. The proprietors of Fátima are abusing people's faith. Instead of explaining, as Jesus did, that if you are poor, you must take your fate into your own hands, fraternise with all those who take their fate into their own hands, and free yourself from the slavery imposed on you by owners and masters, freeing yourself from that oppression, they are reinforcing the tendency we often show to place the solution to our suffering in the hands of others. Father Mário Oliveira, speaking of Our Lady of Fátima, says: '*The country's rulers, both during the colonial war and today, take advantage of her to justify what can never be justified, such as war. They never miss an opportunity to emerge during those moments of great conquest in difficult times with hypocritical and disgusting devotion to Mary. However, they turn politics into an activity opposed to that of the God of Mary, because they make the rich ever richer and increasingly deprive the poor of the essential goods of life*'. The message of Jesus is a political agenda. The arrogant attitude of the Church Fathers is another political agenda. Father Mário Oliveira states very clearly that this is a political abuse of the Gospel of Jesus: '*After the dismantling of the USSR and Russia's subsequent conversion to NATO and the multinational corporations of money, Fatima should have been forced to close its doors. Fatima was born under the sign of anti-communism and the constant desire for Russia's conversion, so as not to further spread evil throughout the world. Strangely enough, or perhaps not, it always forgot about capitalism, even though, in light of the Gospel of Jesus, it is intrinsically perverse and currently the primary culprit for environmental degradation and the murder of millions of impoverished people.*' I would say that the abuse of the Gospel of Jesus is not a local phenomenon, but can be seen throughout the Christian world."

Joanna's classmate notes: "And that's partly a result of the way Jesus is presented by those in power. Did they want to turn a fighter into a sufferer?"

To which Father Martim replies: "That's how I see it to some extent. Much has been written about Jesus, and through translations from archaic languages, many interpretations emerge. Dragó has his character say it this way: '*Nothing and no one has caused such a flood of biographies in world history as my own, but this could have been avoided: almost everything written causes more confusion than light. My biography, systematically falsified by the evangelists and their epigones, has yet to be written. So many titles, as is usual, obscure the library, just as the trees obscure the forest. And this, Wojtyla, because ninety-nine out of a hundred authors of these books believe they are right to rely solely on what Paul dictated, on what the so-called (and supposed) evangelists wrote*'. You see it happen again and again in history. When, in the face of injustice—and in Jesus' time, that was the intermingling of worldly power and possessions with religious precepts, which made Jerusalem a center of power where the propertied class and the Church Fathers exercised almost absolute power over an impoverished population—a movement arises to undo that injustice, you get a twofold reaction from the sphere of power. The first is usually brutal violence, and when that fails or is insufficient, a period of recuperation follows. That is precisely what happened with the movement initiated by Jesus. I quote Father Mário Oliveira again: '*Sadly, as the church of Jesus became a religion of the Roman Empire, with its priests and its rites, its cult and Levitical liturgies in the temples, everything changed. The good news that God saves us by pure grace—an initiative, even today, unthinkable for the common humanity, and that it is the result of the infinite creative and liberating love he has for both women and men—was replaced by the bad news all religions proclaim, which, in short, boils down to this: if you want to be saved, go to our cult, pay your tithes to priests and pastors, obey all the norms taught by our catechesis, come to our*

temples, and do everything our pastors and priests tell you to do.'

"So, in effect, the Roman Church undid some of Jesus' work," one student wonders.

"You could say that," answers Father Martim. "Frei Bento says that Jesus' work was to liberate Jerusalem and that it cost him his life. He describes the Jerusalem of that time as '*A mandatory pilgrimage center for all Jews, an economic and financial center. A house of prayer and a National Bank, or a den of thieves, as the prophets preferred to call it. It was the place where God was officially invoked most, but where people were most oppressed and deceived in His name.'* And isn't that the same today, in our capitalist world where people are seduced to individual consumption? Regarding Fátima, Mário Oliveira says it has become an indestructible tourist and economic structure. But isn't all religious tourism, regardless of the religion, the world over, just that? A way to enrich the structure at the expense of the impoverished and misled? That's why Dragó's figure of Jesus says: "*Wojtyla… whenever the world declines in virtue, I appear. That is the reason for my letter. We have never sunk so low. I am writing to you so that you may intervene and break the idols from the temple, a temple in which you find only moneychangers and hypocrisy, so that you may regain your dignity before you die. I have not come to establish churches, but to dismantle them.'* Perhaps it is time for all of us, believers and atheists, to think about this together and find out how to disembarrass *polis* and *templum* of the money changers and free us from their arrogant oppression."

Joanna then says, "This has been a very interesting conversation, Father Martim. We thank you very much for coming. Would you like to say anything to conclude?"

Father Martim laughs again and says, "Don't take my word for it, young people, or the words of those I quote. Mario Oliveira might gently point out to me the dangers of reinforcing our own ideas by using quotes taken from a broader context. I can only say my intention was to give you a critical message about the Church and

to point out the danger of religion forcing believers and their faith into a framework of thought determined by those in power. But I hope I invited you to read books by Saramago, Dragó, Mario Oliveira, and in general, by believers and atheists, deists and agnostics, to further sharpen your own critical minds, whether you yourself are believers or not."

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At the end of the school year in mid-2005, Joana leaves high school to begin her psychology studies in September. The assessment she and her sister made of the debate club was that it often succeeded in shedding light on the institutions of our society from the margins of that society. Economy, school, and the church were discussed with invited guests who helped to cast a critical eye. There were also discussions about medicine and hospitals, about the military and their role during the Carnation Revolution, and about public order, justice, and the prison system, for which no notes have been found. Joana wrote in a letter to their grandfather John:

> *In the debate club, we managed to critically examine each of the institutions Foucault calls the instituting institutions of society, in addition to addressing other human-made institutions. During those debates, we often thought of you, Grandpa, and of your conversations about the arrogance of power and the way people are often kept ignorant or trapped in a bubble of ignorance.*
>
> *We often talk about this with our friends. Did you know that Catherine now volunteers on initiatives organised by NGOs? Sometimes we work together on such an event. Dad isn't always happy about it. Not because of the initiative itself, of course; we can see that he appreciates our solidarity with others. No, what worries him is that this often keeps us out of the house late, and sometimes we have to be driven home by friends or a taxi late at night or early in the morning. He sometimes looks a bit like the fish Marlin in the movie* Looking for Nemo*, which we saw together last summer when we rented that DVD at the movie rental store, remember? And now he's already worried*

because Catherine has her driver's license and I've started theory lessons. He's willing to borrow the car as often as we like, but meanwhile, he's almost certainly thinking it'll make us even more independent. He's not only the fish Marlin, but also a bit of a mother hen, ha, ha.
A big kiss from your youngest granddaughter.

Renewed encounters and further studies

After graduating from high school, Catherine enrolled in college, intending to prepare herself professionally to work with people in organisations, or to be involved in the social activities of companies. During a meeting aimed at encouraging hospital doctors and patients to consider avoiding arrogant behaviour in doctor-patient relationships, she met Alberto Campos. He was interested not only in the medical aspects of the unequal knowledge between doctor and patient, but also in how information can hinder communication. Gradually, they began to interact more and eventually decided to live together as a couple.
Not long before this, as mentioned, it had become clear to Joana that she was particularly interested in studying group behaviour, both from young and old. That's why she ultimately chose to study psychology. At the time, Paulo was working as a teacher at the neighbourhood school not far from where the family lived, and in Joana's final year of secondary school, father and daughter agreed that she would spend some of her free afternoons in the classroom, observing the children while working with small groups on projects she was also interested in. She wrote to her grandfather about this:

Dear Grandpa.
Yes, I took my decision. I want to become a psychologist. I'm not sure yet whether I want to work with children or adults; we'll see. Dad suggested I use some of my free afternoons to work with the children in his class on some projects they're working on. I thought that was a great idea. It was like stepping into my own elementary school,

Grandpa. The first time I was in the class, some of the children showed me their work from last year. They talked a lot about Jorge Du Port, a friend of Dad's and Dad told me that he and his wife met you someday through mutual friends! Jorge is specialised in space medicine and, of course, knows a lot about space. So the children in Dad's class invited him to help them with a space project, and together they went to the Pavilhão do Conhecimento — you know, that activity center you used to visit with us when we were kids. It's fun to see them doing some little experiments with Dad and Jorge. The children love nothing more, but apparently, they had a tremendous imagination when it came to explaining natural phenomena. Perhaps some of the stories come from their grandparents. Most of them come from the Cape Verde Islands and suddenly find themselves in a suburb — part slum, part social housing estate— and often offer supernatural interpretations of phenomena that have a very simple scientific explanation. I'm truly amazed at how quickly the children absorbed the scientific clues Jorge offered them, both during their visit to the Pavilhão and later in class, when they further developed the information.

Furthermore, today I understand the role of that instituting meeting we call the Council, which I remember as a child. I've now personally experienced how the children, guided by an adult, arrive at agreements that make sense for everyone, and how they adjust those agreements if they discover someone is struggling with it. Generally, they find a solution together with my father by adjusting the agreement, and it's very rare that they have to point out to someone how to properly comply. They speak very openly about transgressions, perhaps because in the Council, care is taken to ensure that the conversation never becomes an accusation with a penalty attached. However, everyone knows that not everyone has the same level of maturity to comply with the agreements. Dad says it's completely inappropriate to accuse someone of not keeping an agreement when everyone already knows they simply can't handle it yet. In that case, it's better to provide support for that person, perhaps from the classmate, perhaps from the teacher himself, and that seems very logical to me. And from what I could see, the children Dad works

with, feel the same way. I often think that many conflicts stem from a lack of good communication, Grandpa.
A big kiss from Joana.

John replies to that letter with a book by Françoise Dolto and writes:

Dear Joana,
That was, as always, a very beautiful letter you wrote me. You know, when I read your words about the Council, I thought of what I learned with Fernand Oury. Every time we met or wrote, I felt like I was learning something new. The book I'm sending you will certainly interest you as a future psychologist. Françoise knows about Institutional Pedagogy—that is, the model your father adopted, judging by what you're writing. Next time you're with us, you should ask your grandmother more about Dolto; I know she read a lot of her work herself when she was a math teacher.
But perhaps you'll also find information in Portugal that interests you. I know your mother met some very interesting people long before you were born, and perhaps you'll find texts in Portuguese about communication, advice, and the resolution of conflict. If my memory serves me correctly, your parents once mentioned a pedagogue named Sérgio Niza. I think he was part of a movement of teachers that developed using the ideas of two French educators, Célestin Freinet and Fernand Oury, whom I mentioned earlier. But I could be wrong, of course. Perhaps you'll find out more yourself.
A big kiss from your grandpa.

The following year, Paulo resigned from his teaching position. He was tired of constantly being hampered by a pedantic and arrogant principal who painted a very negative picture of the school's neighbourhood. When he forced Paulo to take on a bureaucratic administrative role, writing reports to evaluate younger colleagues, he had had enough. Paulo worked with these colleagues in a learning community setting and categorically refused to write reports that could easily be misused to classify teachers within a rigid structure. He resigned and joined an international non-

governmental organisation that develops projects based on the establishment of learning communities with adults.

Catherine enrols in a master's program to expand her knowledge of marketing techniques. Joanna begins her studies and is surprised to learn that the instructor for one of the optional courses is the Niza her father mentioned. She still hasn't decided which direction to pursue, child psychology or clinical work, and enrols in the optional course. She also explores the possibility of studying abroad for a semester. She knows from her sister, who completed three internships abroad as part of her studies, that these experiences abroad are very useful. She writes to John:

Dear Grandpa,

I've started my studies. First surprise: the pedagogue you mentioned in a previous letter teaches an optional course at my faculty. I signed up for it!

Catherine has decided to spend a year studying and getting a master's degree. She says this will open up more job opportunities. If I understand correctly, she wants to contact Hypolite d'Ailleurs, whose phone number and email she still has. She also wants to know what Steven is doing. He always said he wanted to study to be a pilot. Mom and Dad thought for a while that Steven was more than just a good friend, but they were wrong! Meanwhile, Alberto and Catherine would like to live together, but they're waiting to make an official announcement until they find something. So don't tell Dad anything when you call or write him.

I'm planning to study abroad for the first semester next year. I'm thinking of Paris or maybe Ghent. That would be great, of course, because then I'd be close to you. But Paris is only about an hour from Brussels by train. Everything will definitely be arranged next summer, so we can make plans when Catherine and I come to your place for vacation.

Big kiss from Joana

When Catherine and Joana spend the summer with their grandparents, Catherine has her master's degree. She talks about

her plans to explore interesting initiatives with Hypolite. At one point, when she mentions the arrogant way wealthy resort users address staff—an experience she gained during an internship—John brings up his father's table and casually mentions that their father later revised it. "The sneaky one. He always says it was his grandfather's table," says Catherine.

Joana is again interested in that table. This definition of Ideal Types taking into account their degree of arrogance and ignorance, might help analyse the communication difficulties between different personalities. John explains to them that his father, himself, and Paulo were primarily concerned with interpreting relationships in learning at school and in learning communities.

"Do you have Dad's version of the table?" Catherine asks John. After searching through his papers, he does indeed find a letter with Paulo's table. While Catherine examines the table, Joana says:

"Ultimately, I won't be coming to Ghent, and I won't be going to Paris either. My faculty has an agreement with the psychology faculty at Le Mirail University in Toulouse, and I'll be spending at least a semester there, perhaps a full year. I'll be leaving for Toulouse in about a month. I've already noticed it takes about seven hours by TGV from Brussels. There are also direct flights from Zaventem to Blagnac. Maybe you could come visit me? I've already arranged to meet some friends. Catherine and Alberto are definitely coming, and Steven has also agreed. He wants to visit the Airbus installations, of course!"

"Remember me who is this Steven?", asks Jeanne.

"He's an old friend of ours. He was in Catherine's high school class, remember? He's a pilot now and works for a cargo airline. He wants to accumulate flight hours to transition to passenger transport. He dreams of getting a job with a national airline, preferably British Airways; he's a British citizen."

In September, Joana settles in Toulouse. She managed to rent a

room in a student apartment near Avenue Etienne Billières, within walking distance of the metro station *St Cyprien République*. The metro line not only allows her to quickly reach the psychology faculty at Université II Le Mirail, but also the center of the old city with its many parks, terraces, and bars where students often gather.
Joana quickly builds a small circle of friends consisting of French and international students. She meets Ester Langlauf, of Germanic Swiss descent, who, like her, has chosen to complete part of her studies abroad. They both share a common interest in communication and social interaction. They are taking, among other things, an optional course in ethology. They are interested in everything related to internal and external communication barriers. They connect with the *Institutional Pedagogy* which is not new for Joana, and soon after also with the *Institutional Psychotherapy*. These two relationship structures continue to fascinate Joana not only because they evoke memories of letters and conversations with her grandfather, but also because the institutional nature of communication between individuals who envision a learning community or other permanent group preoccupies her. During a visit from her sister, they review what they know about the formative value of the cooperative, including its regulatory impact. They have a long conversation about the difference between *cooperation* and *collaboration*. Later, Catherine would say that they always felt that the attempt to make the two concepts synonyms wasn't an unconscious act of someone not very fluent in language. She claims that since that conversation in Toulouse, they have both remained convinced that it was a conscious choice by arrogant figures in academia and politics to blur the line between two options, according to Paulo Freire, completely different: working with people or working for people. For both sisters, collaboration implies a vertical relationship, cooperation a horizontal relationship. "Besides," Catherine would often say later, "you can clearly see that business leaders in a capitalist economy have no

doubts about the vertical relationship in their company, whether it's a large industry or a small shop: they ask for *collaboration* when talking about employees and workers. Only in cooperatives with only cooperators do you find *together*-workers…"

While Joana is staying in Toulouse, a looming global financial crisis suddenly explodes in full force. Insiders have been aware of what was coming for some time. It's yet another crisis caused by unscrupulous individuals seeking power and enrichment, even if that enrichment consists solely of figures on electronic documents. Banks have thrown themselves into a spiral of highly speculative credit with the construction sector and real estate sales from which they suddenly can no longer escape. It all began with mortgage loans used to purchase overvalued properties. Today, the international banking world is in full-blown crisis. Yet, many of the financial criminals escape the consequences. They manage to get those in power and politicians who are eating out of their hands to point the finger at the poor and immigrants. Suddenly, those are accused of causing the crisis by taking out reckless loans. Furthermore, many small savers are being affected. Banks had convinced them to invest their money in bonds backed by these mortgage loans, without knowing exactly what they were investing in. John and Paulo see this as yet another example of how possessions and power lead to perverse situations, but also that cultivated ignorance leads the tulip bulb fantasy [See *A dangerous thought*] regularly to resurface. The most disturbing aspect of this umpteenth version is that the so-called representatives of the people in various countries, led by the United States, quickly agree that taxpayer money can be used to bail out the banking system. As a result, social projects are being shelved or written off.

In response to this banking scandal, the Christian members of the conversation and discussion group that John is a member of are once again bring up the *Institute for Religious Works*. He's a bit

surprised, especially when they link it once more to the death of John Paul I. They implicitly attach value to what an accused person said in one of the many trials against the Italian mafia. He allegedly said something about it to Judge Paolo Borsellino. It would amount to saying that the leadership of the *Vatican Bank* allegedly had the Pope assassinated. John notes that what happened then had nothing to do with the current banking scandal. This amounts to the systematic robbing of people, on the one hand, by granting loans to those known in advance not to have the means to repay them, and on the other hand, by proposing lucrative investments for their savings to poorly informed small savers. When John talks about this mortgage loan with his granddaughters, Catherine remembers that her father once told them about the system in Portugal when he and Maria first moved there. The banking system at the time encouraged loans that were repaid with increasing returns, based on expected inflation and the mortgagee's career development. In the first few years, these repayments were so small they didn't even cover the interest. As a result, the debt to the bank increased. This allowed the interest on the amount owed to be kept artificially high for extended periods. The capitalist system thus turned also the right to housing, enshrined in the "humanist" Declaration of Human Rights, into a financial obligation.

When Steven Bird arrives in Toulouse with an invitation for an interview at Airbus in Blagnac, he brings along several Portuguese newspapers. They describe the local banking scandals as a kind of offshoot of the global crisis. Without specifying the extent to which the Portuguese *Banco de Negócios* is involved in the speculative games among banks that led to the collapse of the mortgage market in the United States, several dangerous relationships are exposed between the bank manager and key figures from the conservative parties, including the president.
Steven notes: "One thing is already clear. The Portuguese

authorities, like those in other countries ignored somewhat the press. Yet, I fear the press only tells us the 'accepted' versions. Perhaps, for the next crisis, those in power will even learn from this to create better fog banks and better control and restrict press freedom."

Catherine and Joana show him the table they got from Grandpa John with the types plotted on it. They try to place European and American politicians on it, but also individuals who might operate more obscurely. "You could make a Cluedo or Monopoly board game out of it," Steven says, laughing.

Catherine laughs too and says, "More like Cluedo. Ultimately, the arrogance of a few leads to the death of many, in certain cases. It could even be a game of Stratego."

Joana frowns: "But all in all, there's little to laugh about. The table shows the potential for constructing a perverse social reality, where some people take power for granted and view others as objects. It starts at school, and according to Grandpa, often in other institutions as well, like the church or the army, and it ends up in all sorts of aspects of human social life. I found what I learned about the institutional work in relationships and communication very interesting, but I see so little of it happening in our society. We could almost call it a utopia…"

At this, Steven bursts out laughing: "Sorry, I can't help it. I was thinking we have three proposals for game boards. If we launch all three, I thought, we'll be incredibly rich."

After Steven frees himself from the pillows under which he is buried by both sisters, Joana asks: "What are you actually going to do at Airbus?"

"I applied to be a test pilot."

"*Test pilot???*", both sisters exclaim simultaneously.

"Stop, I'm not going to play the Wright Brothers or Howard Hughes! There's a team of test pilots at Airbus who spend most of their time checking the airworthiness of every new aircraft, ensuring they

meet the announced limits. I also hope this will give my resume a boost in the direction of a national passenger transport company."

As soon as Catherine returns to Lisbon, she contacts Hypolite and asks if he can help her develop some of her ideas.

Meanwhile Joana is developing a growing bond with Ester. As soon as they have the opportunity, they plan to further explore what deaf and hard-of-hearing people can teach hearing people about communication models.

John and Jeanne come to visit their granddaughter. They are staying in a small hotel near the Jean Jaurés metro station. They make the square in front of the *Capitolium* the meeting place for afternoon aperitifs, after which they often stroll the rosy-red streets in search of a cozy restaurant for dinner. On one of these walks, Joana takes Ester along, whom she's eager to introduce to her grandparents. That day, they visit the recently reopened *Old Toulouse Museum.* Then they walk to Place St. Georges where they'll grab a bite to eat. There, Ester and Joana tell John about their plans to visit children with communication difficulties due to physical or psychological reasons and explore with them how to resolve misunderstandings that often arise between people who communicate, not only when using adapted tools or languages, but also between people who share the same language.

"The bottom line," says Joana, "is that we assume that people who frequently encounter communication difficulties can teach us from their own experience how to make verbal and non-verbal interactions more effective."

"We're not in a hurry," Ester continues. "After we graduate, we'd each like to establish a network of contacts with parents and children in our own communities and become more communication-savvy ourselves."

"That sounds very interesting," says John. "Perhaps you'll encounter the phenomena of arrogance and ignorance and their

influence on the will to learn."
Joana laughs. "I was wondering when you were going to bring this up, Grandpa," she says. "Ester, you know, that table Steven wants to turn into a Cluedo game…"
"A Clue game?" asks John.
Joana tells him about her conversation with Steven and Catherine.
"Hmm," John says. "I think Catherine's right. It would be more like a Stratego game. But in our case, there are more than two players. And perhaps no one is particularly interested in being the eternal loser... Maybe it's better to think about analysis than battles…"
"Unfortunately," Ester adds, "arrogant analyses are often the root of conflict. And even more often, the root of all sorts of difficulties for many people. But perhaps a better understanding of existing communication models can help thwart warmongers and make them less likely to resort to weapons."

The day before John and Jeanne return home, they invite Joana to join them to visit *Cité de l'Espace (City of Space)*. Since this scientific information park opened its doors over ten years ago, it has always been John's dream to visit it.
John and Jeanne spend a lot of time with their granddaughter in the exhibition hall dedicated to Mars. Joana looks closely at the design of this hall for people with mental, visual, motor, or hearing impairments, which *Cité* has given the *Tourism and Disability* award.
"When I was a little boy," John tells Joana, "I often dreamed about traveling to Mars. Of course, I already had Jules Verne's *Journey to the Moon* but Mars was something else… It all seems so simple when you see it from the comfort of Earth... Perhaps one day your children will watch Mars reports, just as your dad watched the Moon reports in the 1970s.
Together they visit the *Terr@dome*. Joana notes that all policymakers should be locked up in this room for a while. That way, they might learn to see Earth as a habitat within a hostile

universe. That might give them a little more respect for our shared "spacecraft".

John then says, "Yes, that's such a contradiction. Top policymakers employ an army of technicians to keep their vehicles running smoothly and protect them from any danger, but they barely give a second thought to the only shared means of transport we have for traveling through space. It protects everyone's life, including their own, yet they don't mind being careless with it."

After visiting the working model of the MIR space station, they leave the *Cité*. They return the *Pierre Goudouli Garden* where they find an esplanade for a late afternoon snack. Joana then walks with her grandparents to their hotel. They say goodbye, and Joana continues walking to the Jean Jaurés metro station, where she takes the metro home.

Ultimately, Joana spends a full year in Toulouse, after which she returns to Lisbon. Shortly after her return, she participates in a street project where, one evening, she meets Daniel N'Kondo. She talks about her experiences in Toulouse and her plans to conduct research with Ester in the field of communication. Daniel is active in the theater world while, as he himself says, he might be studying sociology without exaggeration. Because of Joana's deafness, they often seek out quiet cafés or esplanades, where it's easy to talk. That same year, Daniel goes to Ghent for the second semester of the academic year. Joana joins him during the Easter holidays, and John delights in taking his granddaughter and her boyfriend to visit the city, telling them all about his childhood. He even manages to visit the teacher training college and the old staff residence where he spent his childhood, after receiving permission from the current headmistress of the college.

Dear Grandpa,

I'm back home. In two months, Daniel's semester in Ghent ends. We both really enjoyed getting to know Ghent better with you, and of course, Daniel was also very enthusiastic about our visit to Oostende.

He told me he plans to call you and ask about coming to visit you again before he returns.

I'm currently busy gathering testimonies from deaf children and their parents, and from educators of children with complex communication disorders. Ester and I have already agreed with our respective counselors to focus on communication and interaction in specific cases. What we've both noticed is that almost no psychologists know sign language. This means that completely deaf people who want to consult a psychologist usually need an interpreter. The same applies to medical consultations. We feel this is a significant invasion of privacy in such situations. I can hold simple conversations myself and have now decided to improve my knowledge of the language. Did you know, by the way, that sign language has been an official language in Portugal since 1997? In Finland, it has been since 1995. In Flemish Belgium, the language has been officially recognised two years ago, in France since 2005, and in French Belgium since 2003. But most countries haven't reached that point yet. This year does seem to be a breakthrough year in Latin America. But few countries have officially enshrined sign language as a national language in their constitutions, as Portugal, Austria, South Africa, or Venezuela have already done. The various statutes on sign language nevertheless provide an indication of how policymakers approach communication models and the communication problems that can be derived from them. But that's just one example…

I just finished reading a really good biography by Hellen Keller, and my interactions with children with severe disabilities and their parents have shown me how challenging communication can be! So, lots to do!

Grandpa, if Daniel contacts you about going down to the coast, would you mind helping him out? He's a bit absent-minded, a bit like that Chilean friend of yours, Dad sometimes talks about.

A big kiss from Joana.

Dear Joana,

Daniel is a very pleasant guy to talk to. It's good that you warned me he was a bit absent-minded. I was able to catch him in Bruges just before leaving on the train to Knokke instead of the one to Oostende.

On the train, we had our first conversation about theater, and I was very fascinated by what he told me about Angola. He mentioned, among other things, the groups Tchinganje, Xilenga-teatro, and Elinga Teatro and the role in these groups of the writer José Mena Abrantes, whom he seems to know quite well. We also talked quite a bit about the Cultural Council, which I worked for at the time. And apparently, you spoke with him about my father's framework regarding ignorance and arrogance. You see, dear granddaughter, there were plenty of topics of conversation.

I read your text about being deaf. I immediately translated it into Dutch. If you have any other texts you'd like to share with me, please send them to me. I'd be happy to read them.

Grandma and I would, of course, also love to have you and your sister visit us again. Think about another summer trip to the wet north.

Hellen Keller seems to be a key figure when it comes to communication, doesn't she? What fascinates me is how the institutional nature of the communication between her and Ann Sullivan worked here as well. They managed to break down institutional barriers and forge new paths by jointly searching for working rules, in this case, rules for communicating concepts and thoughts so they could be understood by both. My grandmother, whom I never knew, spoke to my father about Hellen Keller and the significance of her mentor Ann's work. I had to swallow my emotions for a moment when I read that you also mention her in connection with your studies.

A big kiss from your grandpa.

Along the way, Catherine learns not only to organize initiatives professionally but also to bring people together for a wide variety of causes. She still involves her sister in some of her work. She writes to John:

Dear Grandpa,

Thank you for your lovely letter and the birthday present. I'll be able to make good use of it in my future activities. A digital camera lets me register things better. I'm willing to update my website regularly without too much difficulty. I especially want to demonstrate how to

professionally bring people together for solidarity initiatives. I recently had a long conversation with Hypolite, you know, that friend who guides people in developing their own projects. We were thinking about how to avoid turning solidarity into mere charity actions. We believe it's important that people can organize themselves and decide whether or not they want to call for solidarity action and specifically what it's for. We both believe that simply taking to the streets and calling for justice doesn't achieve much, other than negative reactions from those who move in different circles and might intervene. We also have questions about money and solidarity, about conviviality and solidarity, or both of these aspects, when taking action with others. According to Hypolite, a capitalist world obliges to use money even if one advocate for a different kind of society in group. What we do know is that cooperatively managing infrastructure is much more efficient and cheaper than financing individual structures even for those who have means. We call it reverse solidarity. We think of setting up solidarity campaigns with those who have too much money and consume too much individually, teaching them to live well through cooperation and the sharing of goods and services. Naturally, we encounter considerable misunderstanding at the outset. Those who think they are potential charitable sponsors often react with confusion when we suggest that, instead of donating money to someone else's project, they should manage existing and emerging community structures together with those with less money. This is quite different from giving away surpluses. It's about creating new social bonds between different personalities with completely different perspectives.

Joana recently joined us for a discussion session with a group interested in our idea. Afterward, she showed us a report about Jean Oury and institutional psychotherapy at Château Laborde, titled 'The right to madness'. *We believe that our proposal to establish a living and residential project together should be entitled* 'The right to conviviality'. *The interested parties I'm referring to are involved in a neighbourhood project. The neighbourhood consists of a private condominium and a social housing estate. We proposed that all residents come together with the aim of opening up the shared structures they each have to each other. Yes, even in a private*

condominium there are shared structures, such as a swimming pool, gymnasium, and central laundry. In the social housing estate, there are several good and relatively inexpensive restaurants and hairdressers. There's also a large community vegetable garden. I think I mentioned that we've been having exploratory conversations for a few months now, and it's very interesting to see how people are discovering each other. They're finding that they can cooperate quite easily on projects for which some have made funding available, instead of maintaining the classic giver-receiver relationship, which ultimately leaves the hierarchy of the haves and the have-nots unchanged. The mutual aggression is visibly decreasing. The people involved feel that they are developing a new concept for the term "ownership".

With the digital camera, we hope, if we receive permission, to regularly make short recordings of key conversations for to use in meetings with other anthropogogues.

Dear Grandpa, when you visit us again, I suggest you visit the projects we supervise.

A big kiss from Catherine.

As they'd hoped, John and Joana are having their two granddaughters visit them during a two-week summer vacation. Alberto is joining them for a long weekend. He scheduled job interviews in Brussels and London and arranged to spend three days in Oostende between appointments in both locations.

Joana recently became involved in a mentoring project for schools with high repeat and dropout rates. Catherine continues to mentor the community service she mentioned in her letter. She also has a part-time position at a commercial company that funds social projects with surplus profits, which provides financial advantages when calculating corporate taxes.

One evening Joana says: "Schools are places where children can acquire knowledge, regardless of anything."

John looks at her: "Are you having difficulties with teaching staff and standards?"

Joana sighs: “It's terrible, Grandpa. Officially, they call it an inclusive policy, but in practice, it means all the children end up in classes with teachers carelessly focussing on the non-existent average. When we’re called in, it’s mainly to ask us to legally establish that anyone who doesn’t fit that imaginary average must be excluded.”

“Rejected?” her sister asks.

“In practice, that's what it boils down to. Children become files, and a filed child can be excluded from the classroom. They’re often referred to therapies they don’t really need. The institution itself is in dire need of therapy. Elementary and secondary schools, which are supposed to help everyone acquire as much knowledge as possible, are machines that triage and categorise people year after year. The more arrogantly average-seekers use the structure, the more ignorants the school produces. It’s often hopeless.”

“Let me guess,” John smiles. “The parents of the children in the case are advised to find another school, perhaps with a modified program, or perhaps with a specific model or special methods.”

“Yes, Grandpa, exactly. Those models exist, some have long since proven to be truly open to everyone and to help all children in the group progress, but they’re dismissed as too labour-intensive for teachers, not sufficiently standardised, utopian, or whatever, and therefore not generalisable. As soon as you propose letting all children work as much as possible from their own interests with solid guidance for their basic education in language, math, science, history, and philosophy, you’re in for a real disaster. Sometimes I think arguments are invented for not doing what should be done in a school. Most of those arguments are difficult to debunk, starting with: *‘if we do that we will lose our good position in the ranking’.* The ghetto schools at the bottom of the rankings, on the other hand, rarely have staff who can seriously address the difficulties. Or then happens what happened to Dad: at some point, anyone who takes the children seriously is bullied with administrative standards or

pushed aside. If that doesn't work, there are more or less subtle ways to remove such a person from the school."

"Everything is so contradictory," Catherine observes. "From anthropogogy and the pedagogy it encompasses we now know a lot about how people learn. We know, above all, that people learn readily and with pleasure. For Hypolite, and also for Dad, it seemed for a while that the start of the twenty-first century would truly provide a generally favourable context for learning. And now we see once again that with the increase in consumption and individualism, the shared transfer of knowledge paradoxically creates more ignorant individuals. Joana observes the inertia of the school institution; we observe how the cooperative decision-making process in our neighbourhood project inspires the people themselves, but we receive plenty of hostile reactions as soon as we talk about our work in other contexts. It's as if any social structure based on harmony and conviviality is seen as a harbinger of societal collapse."

"So, another paradox," says John. "Models that make the social fabric more cooperative and therefore more social provoke reactions from all those who say they want to strengthen it, but meanwhile only look out for their own advantages. And, like me, you observe that learners who gradually start using these models themselves are looked at askance by both the arrogant and the ignorant. That's not exactly what we imagine when we set general learning and knowledge acquisition as a common goal. But that's perhaps precisely why those with the privileges that come with power only set such general knowledge acquisition as a common goal on paper, or don't promote it at all, not even on paper. You're paradox collectors. But how's the project you're working on going, actually?"

"Very good. Currently, all children who live nearby and want so can use the swimming pool in the condominium. The small restaurants in the social housing estate are increasingly delivering meals to

homes in the condominium. This has resulted in the opening of a canteen with affordable meals, and all the restaurants are participating. Everyone agreed not to provide free meals, so a meal costs at least 1 euro. The restaurants offer the same menus in their own spaces, for home deliveries, and in the canteen. A policy is in place where everyone pays according to their means, whether in the restaurants, for home deliveries, or in the canteen, but everyone can choose from the same selection. The laundry room in the condominium and the local laundromat in the social housing estate work together and serve the entire neighbourhood. The offerings are complementary rather than competitive. Practical agreements are in place for the use of the *concierge* of the condominium: mail and parcels for those who are not home can be delivered there for everyone in the neighbourhood. Residents are currently working on additional agreements regarding the use of the green space, which also includes the vegetable gardens. Those who wish can continue to cultivate their own private vegetable gardens, but the area cultivated and managed cooperatively is expanding. This reduce overproduction of certain vegetables at certain times of the year. All members of the cooperative can pick up fruits and vegetables there regardless of the type of work they perform for the cooperative. At the suggestion of several parents from both the social housing and the condominium, an application was submitted to the municipality to construct two sports fields and a playground for all children on a piece of vacant land bordering the condominium's perimeter wall. The project has been approved and will now be carried out by construction workers who live in the social housing district. The plan was drawn up by two architects from the condominium, and the purchase of materials and equipment will be funded from a shared account to which anyone who wishes can contribute according to their means. The space will be permanently accessible. Therefore, an additional gate leading to the condominium was installed. All users of the space have the codes to open the gate, just

as they have for the swimming pool.
Joana then adds: “We are currently exploring ways to further expand the range of leisure activities for children. Discussions are also underway regarding the neighbourhood’s primary school program. Catherine and Hypolite have asked me if I would be willing to help support interested local residents in developing a well-organised cooperative school that will accommodate all children. The Ministry of Education won’t allow new schools, but is open to giving the two existing state schools in the neighbourhood complete freedom regarding their structure and working model. This primarily means a lot of interaction with the teachers. We don’t want to exclude anyone; we want to involve everyone so that the project becomes a collective one. We hope to see all the neighbourhood children in these state schools over a few years.”

When they get home, Joana and Catherine happen to see the announcement for the film *Elysium* which was released this summer. They go to the movies with their father, accompanied by Alberto and Daniel. Afterward, they have lunch together, and naturally, the conversation turns to rich, poor, and privilege.
“The film doesn’t paint a very rosy picture of the future,” says Catherine, “and there are indeed many indications that we are evolving into a global society in which the rich are getting richer.”
“And the rest of the population would remain or end up in a kind of slave state," Daniel notes. “It's true that many films that take the future of humanity as their subject often assume a kind of limited, wealthy upper world and a vast, poor underworld. And you actually see the same thing in many so-called historical films.”
“So-called?” asks Alberto.
“I say so-called because many of those historical films are partly fictional and portray a society that strongly resembles the one the filmmaker lives in. You change the settings, the clothes, the manner of speaking, but the relationship between those with power and

those without doesn't change and is largely based on that of contemporary society. Even in fantasy films with animals, or in cartoons, the same relationship always reappears.

Joana says: "Perhaps a film with the Illichian '*conviviality*' would be a box office flop unless the plot involves a struggle between a dangerous, corrupt figure who endangers society as a whole and a hero who knows nothing about cooperation but relies on the collaboration of others, and thus manages to avert some kind of apocalyptic ending just in time."

Catherine laughs: "Yes, even in the films on those corny TV channels that only show smiling characters in love who don't know ye they are, unpleasant situations are often inserted to keep the audience from changing the channel. You can count on one hand the films that tell a positive story, where society isn't divided into good and bad guys who alternate between winning and losing."

"But *Elysium* Now," Paulo joins the conversation. "It's not so outlandish to have the very rich live in a colony above a planet that's completely polluted and neglected, largely due to their own actions, while the rest of humanity is, in a sense, imprisoned there. Besides that, there's no new element whatsoever. As always, most of the rich are evil or oblivious to what the others are going through, and from the poor, only those heroes who stand up for themselves and perhaps a little bit for others are filtered out. I sincerely hope this isn't the society the next generations will live in, but I think it's a sign of the times that action films with this kind of plot are particularly successful. In a society based on money and status, you can hardly expect anything else."

"The people learning in cooperatives could, however, build a different reality," says Alberto, and continues: "Although I'm always very critical when I hear talk about non-hierarchical societies, I have to admit that the project Catherine is working on shows that a different form of society can be created over time. But can you make a film about that without it becoming a documentary that

only those who are already convinced will watch?"
"Don't you always have, even in those kinds of communities, who wants to seize power, who sees themselves as the *supreme someones* of everything?" asks Daniel.
"I would ask a different question," says Joana, "what is needed to prevent someone from feeling compelled to adopt that attitude? I think you can only avoid a hierarchically structured society if you can collectively ensure that everyone feels they don't benefit as an individual from such a structure."
"But then we need to think about money in a completely different way, and also about raw materials and products: in a non-hierarchical structure, you don't own them, you simply use them. Therefore, there's no point in owning or using things you don't really need, for living or for the work you do," Catherine believes.
"And, I repeat, that is so far beyond the average cinema-goer's imagination that films with such a story simply do not attract audiences," says Daniel.
"Let us remain optimistic and hope that it will never lead to an *Elysium*," says Joana. "And if it does, let us hope that the result will be something other than the perpetuation of the divide between the haves and the have-nots, the divide between above and below."
Joana could never have imagined that **is just what** would happen during the Rebuilding after the Volcanic Winter. She and her sister would further develop some ideas over the years as they idealised the ignarometric analysis together.

In fall, John receives a letter from Joana about the neighbourhood project:

Dear Grandpa,

This school year, I've decided to stop working with schools that expect child psychologists to do only desk work. I've made it a principle that my work should be done within the group, not separately. Because of this, I suddenly have much less to do! The mediocre school constantly suppresses diversity. I don't want to be a part of that. Sometimes it

feels like an escape, but Dad says that sometimes we have to escape to avoid being swallowed up by a monster. You can't face every dragon.
I work with the staff of a small school, where I participate in classroom activities, both with adults and children. I also have a study group with several parents of children with severe communication disabilities. I also spend a significant amount of time with Catherine and Hypolite on the community project. The work with the schools there is going well. The two principals are intelligently implementing the gradual changes, with the ultimate goal of winning the entire staff over to an integrated curriculum approach based on cooperatively developed projects.
It looks like I'll be taking over some of Catherine's work. I don't know if she's contacted you yet, but she and Alberto are planning to move to London. Catherine has quite a few contacts with two non-governmental organisations headquartered in London, and Alberto is currently a permanent co-worker at a small consultancy that supports startups. He's particularly interested in proposals related to robotics and artificial intelligence.
I hug you both.
Joana

Dear Joana,
I'd just started writing a reply to your last letter when Grandma brought me a letter she'd just retrieved from the mailbox. In it, your sister announced what you'd already written: she's moving to London. The family tradition is being continued. As far as I know our history there are significant movings in every generation. My grandmother moved from the now-defunct Moresnet to Tienen, my father to Ghent, I to Oostende, and your father to Lisbon. And now one of my grandchildren is going to London. I vaguely remember my father talking about his mother's grandparents living in Oostende, and the generation before that supposedly came over from France. I don't know anything further back, but before he died, my brother Hans had begun some research and found tracks leading to what was then the Germanic Empire.
I'm glad you found some schools where your support work is clearly useful. And you're probably relieved to have been able to free yourself

from the grading often expected of school psychologists. There are also schools where learners come together and collaborate. Is it too much of a dream to think that your generation will succeed in making cooperative learning communities a definitive breakthrough? That would certainly be a good thing to address arrogance and ignorance.
A kiss from your grandpa.

Cara Catherine,
Or should I say "Dear Catherine"? So you're moving to our neighbourhood. There will only some seawater between us. There's no longer a ferry from Oostende but the train connection is fast and smooth. You know you're always welcome here! I understand from your letter that you were recruited by a non-profit organisation to address communication between all departments. I hope what you learned in your neighbourhood work with Hypolite will be useful for this new challenge. In NGOs in particular, there's a lot of talk about a cooperative approach, while people continue to confuse collaboration and cooperation. I hope for you that this won't be the case in your new work environment. And if it does, you'll immediately have a new field of study. I advise you to remain alert to the degree of arrogance and ignorance you encounter among those active in the organisation. That might help you avoid getting ahead of yourself, young lady. But perhaps I don't need to warn you about this. I have the impression you know how to handle things.
Let us know soon about your emigrant life.
Big kiss from grandpa

Communication

Shortly after Catherine and Alberto's departure, Joana and Daniel also decided to move in together. Joana continues to supervise the schools in the neighbourhood project and occasionally meets with the Hypolite team to stay informed about the increasingly entrenched cooperation between the two living environments, that of the condominium and that of the social housing estate. She also supports two families who are developing communication

programs, one for a profoundly deaf son and the other for a daughter with significant disabilities. She documents the solutions found and corresponds with Ester about them. Ester, in turn, writes to Joana that she is now following three families and also regularly works with a small group of four children and their two caregivers. The children live in a care center under the permanent supervision of two adults. They develop communication methods to organize their living space together. This requires them to find a balance between individual and collective needs and also try to establish workable routines. Ester is very enthusiastic about this support. A few months later, she announces her engagement. She encloses an invitation for Joana to attend the wedding feast and to stay for a few days to visit the small community herself.

And so, in the spring of 2014, Joana and Ester meet the small community together. They spend an entire day with the children and their caregivers. Although they are both fluent sign language users and experienced using pictograms, they quickly realise once again that in such specific communities, the language used to facilitate communication contains several elements that are highly group-specific. It's not just about the word itself, no matter how it's used or presented, but also about how a particular word is connected to other words. They also observe that gestures or sounds were adapted by everyone when the group identified a physical impediment to any individual. These agreed-upon adaptations ensure clarity regarding a particular word or concept choice and minimise misunderstandings due to random movements. The caregivers therefore often have to act as interpreters for the questions made by Joana and Ester. They explain that when introducing an undiscussed situation, new words and concepts often have to be defined so that the six members of the group can process and interpret them. This is also the case when studying, when observing a short film or after looking at illustrations.

After the visit, both friends discuss the local and universal character

of a language.
“You often find,” says Ester, “that conflict situations aren’t so much the result of a lack of communication, but rather of a consistent interpretation of the words used, regardless of the form of communication. Polysemantic words can easily be a source of misunderstanding. The use of a metaphor or figure of speech, no matter how simple, must be introduced. If it’s not first stated that what follows is figurative, the rest of the conversation can go completely awry.”
Joana laughs. “And go wrong, yes. And yet, I had the impression that the group wasn’t limiting itself to very literal interpretations. What I noticed, just like you, is the context, not only of the situation being discussed, but also of the language used to discuss it. Ultimately, that’s very complex.”
Ester then adds: “that leads me to think that we might be too dismissive of how, among hearing people without observable limitations or barriers, the receiver interprets what was said. Certainly, as adults, we probably too often assume that when someone else speaks the same language, the sequence of words is interpreted in the same way as the person who spoke them and forms the same image.”
“But that means that for every shared agreement, you would need some kind of lexicon to interpret the words that formulate it,” Joana notes. “And not only that. Even if the words are interpreted, the individual’s prior experiences with the phenomenon the agreement addresses also determine their interpretation. That entails a continuous learning process.”
“Does that mean that as soon as the learner halts that process, their ignorance begins to increase?” Ester wonders. She continues: “And I’m not talking about in-depth knowledge of some interpretation of the workings of a natural phenomenon, but rather about the knowledge available within any group of people to avoid misinterpreting each other.”

“That takes time,” Joana observes. “The facilitators in the group we were visiting talked about that necessity. And in our society, there’s usually no time in daily life to calmly determine how we’ll approach something and carefully consider the language to communicate about it. And by that, I don’t mean so much the idiom, but rather the use of words. How often do we assume that it’s sufficient that we all speak Dutch, or French, or English, or whatever language? And when we strive for common agreements in a more international context, confusion is more likely than clarity. Consulting a translation dictionary isn’t enough, and using interpreters, even if they have a lexicon, is a thorny problem.”

“So to address communication,” Ester continues, “the statement *time is money* is certainly out of the question. Firstly, time should not be limited, secondly, no one should not feel like they are wasting time. You can only *lose* time if you make it a tradable commodity. But keeping time outside the realm of economics in our society… that won’t be easy.”

When she returns home, Joana writes to John about this:

Dear Grandpa,

I just returned from a visit with Ester. We observed together a group of four children with significant communication barriers and then had a discussion so I attach my notes.

I wonder if we, in preschool and primary school, and when guiding children in general, pay enough attention to learning to accurately define what we do and say in a group. What I mean is that I now feel we’re paying too little attention to word usage and learning to use words. No, I don’t think that’s saying the same thing twice. I urgently need to reread Vigotsky’s work, but perhaps I should also take up Chomsky. Ester mentioned Barthes. Dear Grandpa, if it really is so labour-intensive to establish clear communication in groups, shouldn’t we make this the main task of the integrating school? Or is that the wrong term? I know you once said that an integrating school isn’t necessarily a pluralistic or multicultural school. It looks like Ester and I will be busy for a while with the work we’ve assigned ourselves.

A big hug from your granddaughter.

Two weeks later, Joana receives an answer.

Dear granddaughter,
As always, I'm delighted to read what's on your mind. I understand from your notes and letter that your visit to Ester was fascinating. Yes, like many words, the word "integrate" is a dangerous one. What are we trying to say? What is an integrating society? Is it one in which everyone who is included must assimilate existing values and cultural manifestations? Or is it a society in which everyone can contribute elements of their own culture, language, and customs? Is an integrating society the same as a pluralistic society? I would say rather not in the first case, some more so in the second. But is that really so? Are there such things as basic rules in a pluralistic society, which are beyond discussion? Is that still a pluralistic society? But shouldn't there be a basic rule in such a society where everyone has a place to spread their own ideas, and that these ideas should never imply that others are not allowed to spread their own ideas? Can the definition of what constitutes a pluralistic society be based on something that is not allowed?
But you also talk about communication in the sense of understanding what the other person is saying. That doesn't necessarily have to do with the social structure. I smile at my own way of doing this, Joana, because I think of all the texts you send me which I first faithfully translate into my own language, in an attempt to understand them better. And of course, I often encounter words that can be translated in very different ways and expressions for which it's sometimes very difficult to find an equivalent in my own language. All of this doesn't make transparency in communication any easier and, as you and Ester say, can lead to misunderstandings that lead to conflict, while the prior agreement was actually intended to avoid such a conflict.
Dear granddaughter, I sometimes dream of a world without money, like Ghent singer Walter de Buck. Here are two verses from his song about it:

I would like to live easily
In a world without money

A world that should not tremble with fear
Before violence and war
I would like to live so easily
In a world without a purpose
Where calculations are made with serifs
No bankers and no junk
I would like to live so easily
In a world without payed work
Where it all happens while playing
That I would not notice work
I would like to live so easily
In a world without fear
How such a world would be I do not now
But surly better, that I do now

I'm not the only one. Over the past three hundred years, quite a few philosophers have proposed a utopia in which ownership is collective and money non-existent. Who knows, maybe it will ever come to that? But for that to happen, many people who see their sole reason for existence as Self-Power will first have to develop that Freirean conscientização (awareness gaining). And the signals from the neoliberal world are diametrically opposed to this. Perhaps that's why learning communities consisting of learners with and without ownership, with and without rituals of working together are so interesting. Anyone who ridicules them, gets angry about them, or finds them irritating has already begun their process of gaining awareness. Only the arrogant ignorants haven't reached that point yet. Which doesn't mean that those who have begun their process of gaining awareness won't try to silence those learning communities that make them uncomfortable. This can also be done remotely. Isn't that precisely what happens on many social networks, where users only read what aligns with their own beliefs and keep everything else invisible and thus non-existent? There's still much work to be done, but much has happened since the advent of the propertied class, which convinced the rest of the population that they were representatives of the gods. This myth has persisted since at least the first settlements, but that's only a short time span since Homo sapiens appeared on

Earth. Like other superstitions, this misconception will disappear sooner or later.
We can talk more about this when we're all together soon for our big family reunion in Lisbon.
A big grandpa kiss.

The large family reunion John announces is the one to celebrate Catherine and Alberto's wedding. Catherine wanted to bring friends and family together for a weekend in a convivial setting. A large farmhouse near the Portuguese village of Porto Côvo, within walking distance of the sea and beach is rented for the occasion. The southern Indian summer allows for plenty of conversations and get-togethers outdoors. Catherine tells John that this approximates her ideal of a convivial society. Joana notes that the idea would be perfect if it happened in a world without money, where the planet was used responsibly rather than exploitatively.

During that meeting, Alberto and Joana have a long conversation about what they call biological and electronic intelligence. They discuss, among other things, original thoughts and digressions in reasoning. They also discuss storing and processing memories and reshaping them. Alberto is amused by Joana's suggestion that a positronic brain like in Asimov's futuristic novels might be the answer to the problem of creative thinking in electronic intelligence. It's too simplistic, he says, to think that quantum technology creates that possibility. Joana asks whether electronic intelligence replaces or augments biological intelligence.

I'm thinking more about expanding the possibilities for cooperation. From the model your family is talking about, with ignorance and arrogance as parameters, I understand that the more interesting possibilities for a pluralistic society lie in the zone of low arrogance and low ignorance. It is crucial to know that intelligence in cooperation processes keeps that arrogance low and allows for a better symbiosis between group and individual. If you understand electronic intelligence as a new partner in the cooperative group,

rather than as a substitute or a collaborator, then I think you get an idea of what electronic intelligence can mean when it interacts with biological intelligence."

"And then the discussion of whether that intelligence is artificial or not is actually irrelevant. That becomes a more philosophical discussion, just like the discussion about good and evil," says Joana.

"Yes, the discussion about cooperation between intelligences is of a different order," Alberto agrees. "But I think it's an important discussion for the future of humanity. It's the discussion about how we collectively use our knowledge and science and put it at the service of each other. It's also the discussion about whether or not we should accept dogmatically, religiously the existence of money and property. If we can free ourselves from that religion, then perhaps we will take steps towards a cooperative sociable society."

John, who overhears the last part of the conversation, now says: "I think that's precisely why the money dogma and those who preach it need to be constantly questioned, and that requires a critical mind. But unlike spiritual faith which calms down once you eliminate canon and dogma, it may be necessary to address the faith in money itself if you also want to question ownership and all the arrogance associated with it."

"So there are two moments here, and that's a big difference from spiritual faith," Alberto thinks. "Arrogant priests and property owners have exploited individual faith over time capturing it in religions that compel obedience, for their own profit. But the belief in money was implanted by those preachers who immediately turned it into a religion. So it's necessary to critically examine not only the dogma and its priest, but also the implanted faith itself. That is perhaps the utopian horizon." He winks at John, who smiles and says: "Isn't having that horizon precisely what makes us move, evolve, think about how we will further shape this society together?"

At the end of the family reunion, the Demeester branch agree to

meet in the spring of 2015 naturally with Alberto and Daniel also in attendance. But spring has barely begun when Anne calls Paulo to announce that John had suddenly become unwell during a gathering with friends. Medical help arrived almost immediately but to no avail. John died while his hand was reaching for Jeanne's. Paulo, Maria, and their daughters spend a few days with Jeanne, after which Paulo promises his sister and mother to visit Jeanne regularly.

Between 2015 and 2019 Paulo travels between Portugal and Belgium at least three times a year. He organises himself to carry out part of his mentoring work remotely and use these trips to further develop his ideas about anthropogogy, also examining educational paradigms and how they relate to the acquisition of a pluralistic attitude. During one of his flights to Brussels, he strikes up a conversation with the flight companion sitting next to him. They soon discover they had both worked as teachers. Paulo listens with interest to his chance conversation partner who explains how he attempted to model a continuum, a kind of comparative grammar for educational systems. He conducted the fieldwork for his study in one of the schools of *A Voz do Operário* where he once worked. Just before they land, Paulo asks if he can read something about this too. He's given a piece of paper torn from a notebook, with a website link and the name of his conversation partner.

At the conference in Brussels that Paulo attends before traveling to Oostende he hears about Flemish doubts regarding the growing demand for Islamic schools. A few days later, he discusses this with the last surviving friend of John's once *tertúlia.* He wonders whether the intransigence of Catholic leaders during the school struggle and the subsequent school pact isn't suddenly having a curious aftermath. Of course in Belgium the opportunity to develop a general school network in which all worldviews could be pluralistically incorporated was missed at the time. He can only

conclude that a kind of Catholic fundamentalism from back then—and perhaps also from today in some Catholic schools—seems to open the door to other fundamentalist school projects. Of course, any school must comply with a number of legal requirements and accept the attainment targets, but is that enough to guarantee a general education? And hasn't state policy itself often jeopardised that general education through ambiguous decisions? Besides religious organisations that see the secular state as a kind of permanent enemy because it prevents them from imposing their own dogmas, others also have critical remarks. Critical movements argue that the state-organized school system itself maintains an underlying dogma. The presented social organisation has always at least a class of owners and a class of labour-sellers almost invariably in a liberal-capitalist structure. Morality and ethics are often far from the norm. Paulo thinks of the books he read by Howard Zinn, Donaldo Macedo, or João Paraskeva, who primarily analyse North American school systems, but also by local European critical authors, such as Jan Devos with *Freinet in Flanders* of Sergio Niza with *Writings on Education.*

"Is it true that we're living in the era of the learner? So much attention is paid worldwide to school systems and their organisation but…" Paulo hesitates.

To this, John's old buddy replies: "You know how your father had placed his hopes in the institutional work of the Oury brothers, and more specifically in those modern school movements that incorporate institutional pedagogy into the model they propose for schools. He saw it as an indication that state schools for adults and children can take the learner as the protagonist. Learners act as facilitators in their own educational project which takes place in a group and is guided by the group. For that is the very essence of this institutional pedagogical—or should I say anthropogical?—model."

Paulo asks: "And do you think that the concept of learning human

being as conceived in this way has remained a marginal phenomenon?"

"Today, think you see more what I should call the instructed person than the learner I'm afraid. Learning communities are still being developed and I heard your father speak expectantly about the initiative of your daughters and their friend with that neighbourhood project, just as I hear about other initiatives initiated by critical pedagogues and anthropogogues, not only in South America but also here, in the slums of major cities, almost everywhere in Europe. There are cooperative initiatives in rural areas of Africa and America, and there are also mutual benefit societies. Self-help groups that use microcredit and their own group financing to support individuals in those groups in setting up their micro-businesses lead a rather hidden life in India, Indochina, and parts of Africa. In all these groups, you find learners who think critically about what they were instructed to do whether or not in the official school systems. But I'm not as optimistic as your father was. I see signs everywhere that the instructed person is being held at the mercy of the Consumerism, on a tight leash, partly due to the imposed credit rules that ensure that the cards of the capitalist remain permanently in the hands of that small percentage of the world's population who claim to own that large percentage of wealth. And I say '*claim to own'* because ultimately they do exactly the same as the high priests of the first agrarian civilisations. They convince the instructed that they are the legitimate owners of nature, the earth and the land, the products. That's what their lawmakers are for. They began to undermine the three powers of democratic society as soon as they were discussed, so they could quietly forget, and cause others to forget, that governments should only have executive power, while representatives should exercise the legislative power of all citizens. The far-reaching particracy allows even the weak image of representation to be severely tarnished. It's not the people who decide who represents them, but

rather nebulous party boards that manipulate the people by spending more time gossiping about other leaders of other parties than explaining their own proposals. Almost no one talks about listening in order to represent. This happens for two reasons. There are those party leaders who simply don't want the people to know what they stand for, yet still want votes, given that the regime they operate under isn't (yet) a dictatorial one. And there are other party leaders who have forgotten to work with the people. They still want to do something for those they consider ignorant. So they assume they faster win votes with insults than by working slowly as mentors for learners. Those who still do this are marginalised in political representation. In a world where everything is short-term, where only the present matters, the future is dismissed as uncertain, and the past as romantic, it's hard for me to believe that democracy as idealised by Montesquieu is still possible."
Paulo sighs: "It looks like our quest for a convivial society will continue for a long time, and that today we may only find our own peace and answers to conviviality on a small scale and in small groups."

On his sixtieth birthday Paulo is noticed by Joana and Daniel that their first grandchild is on the way. Paulo and Maria are overjoyed when Alexandre is born a few months later.
Joana is taking a break from her work for a few months, and Paulo occasionally pitches in at the schools she normally supervises. He is impressed by Joana's ever-present empathy in her guidance of children and adults. Communication between the members of each class group and between the groups themselves is smooth. It's clear that the projects the children undertake are based on their own wishes and are thoroughly discussed with the teachers who guide them in their development. He describes what he sees and gives his notes to Joana so she can keep them with her own notes and later transform into a text.

During the same period, Paulo participates in several debates organized by the NGO for which he provides consultancy. The topics of discussion are learning communities and the structure of educational systems. Paulo usually points out the incongruity between official guidelines for more dialogical education and the way public works continue to build and renovate classrooms and schools as spaces for depository education. In practice, he argues adults still regard young children as objects to be instructed not as dialoguing subjects. During one of these debates, attended by principals of both public and private schools, Paulo recalls his teacher training, when one of the teachers once said that cooperative classes have little chance in a capitalist world. Cooperative learning communities, he says, perhaps have even less chance. He also points out that parents who consciously choose this type of education are almost forced to pay for it, while private schools are not necessarily interested in this rather small niche for those who can afford non-free schooling. One of the other participants in the debate then recommends the book *Utopia for realists*. The book was written by the Dutch economist Rutger Bergman and has the original title *Gratis geld voor iedereen* (*Free Money for Everyone)*. Immediately after the debate, Paulo texts his sister asking if she would order the Dutch version for him. He also recommended Catherine and Joana to read the book.

A difficult climate

September 2018. The school year starts in almost the entire Northern Hemisphere. This year, a young Swedish student makes her voice heard through her perseverance. She skips school for several weeks and publicly expresses her concern about the climate change that threatens her youth, and especially her future and that of all her peers. Gradually, she succeeds in creating a broader movement among young people, and in January, young people in

almost every European country begin skipping school one day a week to take to the streets and raise awareness of climate change with more than just eloquent and noncommittal statements.

At the schools Joana mentors, the adolescents enthusiastically set to work mobilising their peers. Paternalistic school principals, parents, and politicians immediately sound the alarm: students shouldn't be allowed to skip school, they must abide by democratic rules, and by staying away from school, young people are throwing away their future.

"What an aggressive attitude towards young people!" Joana exclaims at a meeting with teachers.

"The hypocrisy is dripping from the statements, that much is clear," agrees a class director. "The older ones are defending themselves. But they're actually reacting against thousands of young people who are doing nothing more than confronting them with reality."

"Here you see another obstacle to good communication," Joana notes, "it's not a matter of difficulties due to language use or understanding, no, it's simply a matter of arrogant adults not listening."

"That's the case for those who play by the rules," the class director replies. "But those who talk about throwing away the future may have heard something, and are taking a paternalistic approach. Some even go so far as to say that the right education gives young people the opportunity to contribute positively to solutions."

"That's not observation, that's villainy. They're quietly ruining things while retaining all their privileges, and passing the problem on to the next generation. Not unconsciously, but very consciously. In a true constitutional state, they would be prosecuted for irresponsible behaviour, just like drunk drivers," Joana continues.

Joana and Catherine keep track of the speeches of young Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, but also of the rapidly growing hate campaign against her and other leading figures among the adolescents who are making themselves heard.

One evening, during a visit by Catherine and Alberto to Portugal, both sisters discuss this with their father. The hate campaigns quickly reveal the degree of ignorance, which, according to Catherine, can mainly be attributed to the educational system, which rarely, if ever, addresses the role of capitalist and consumerist people when it comes to environmental degradation. Joana emphasises the nature of the attacks. These are often personal and shift the public's attention from a global problem to the gossip campaigns they cleverly instigate. What strikes them most is the intolerance with which the young leaders are discussed. They go so far as to accuse them of the CO2 emissions they themselves cause in their travels to participate in international forums, without even mentioning the emissions from billions of trips made in individual transport instead of public transport, or from the millions of recreational cruises and plane trips.

Moreover, says Catherine, there is a constant gloss over the industrial emissions that flow from the economic fable of perpetual growth, and a flippant disregard for intensive agricultural techniques that serve to depress prices in the rich hemisphere, not to feed people in the poor hemisphere.

Joana believes that there is a war of attrition going on because of who has the power and wants to keep it, with the underlying message being: 'keep quiet and be silent unless you join our *real politic* ranks. It's strange how, at the same time, some politicians and top figures attending major world summits are showing discomfort," she adds.

Paulo is just about to answer when the phone rings. Catherine and Joana hear him ask who's on the line, and they only hear him give very brief answers. Then it goes quiet. Then they hear him ask in a broken voice: "what do you recommend next?"

It goes quiet again, and Paulo says: "just a moment, I'll take something to write." He finishes by saying, "Can I reach you at this number? Any time? That is good, thank you." The phone is put

down.
A little over a minute later, Paulo re-enters the room with a pale face. “Children, he begins, tears welling in his eyes. "That was a phone call from the Algarve Central Hospital with a terrible message. It was about Maria. Apparently, she became unwell during the presentation she was giving at the university that invited her, and… she was transferred… they performed emergency surgery on her… and… she is… they couldn’t save her… your mother has just passed away, children.”
It takes a moment for Joana and Catherine to grasp what Paulo is saying. Then little Alexandre wakes up. Distracted, Joana goes to get him out of his crib, and while she’s holding him in her arms with a rattle, all three of them start to cry softly.
The next day, they depart for the south together, accompanied by Daniel and Alberto. They notify friends and family and prepare for the vigil and the funeral. It is a simple but emotional farewell, with hundreds of Maria’s friends present to escort her to her final resting place.
A few days later, Catherine and Alberto return to London. Paulo scales back his consulting activities and often visits Joana or friends.

Young people continue to regularly draw attention to climate change. Those in power no longer dismiss it as the fabrications of frustrated ecologists, but rather minimise it. Fallacies are used to convince the growing masses of ignorant consumers to adjust their consumer behaviour but certainly not to reduce it. Suddenly individual solar panels and individual electric cars are the new definitive solution. Public and collective infrastructure is being further privatised and the investing interest groups continue to dictate the course of action. Electric trains, which once had to compete with individual transport based on fossil fuels, are now losing out to the growing flood of electric individual vehicles. Not

electric is the key word, but *individually*. Yet, individual vehicles are reluctantly banned from certain neighbourhoods in major cities, but only after sufficient exceptions have been established to allow those with money to maintain their private transportation privileges wherever they are. Furthermore, investors are seeking new opportunities to boost consumption. Intangible goods are being promoted. The increasingly opaque installations of telephone and digital communication infrastructure is just one example. It is not unusual to see a tripling or even quadrupling of fiber optic cables and basic infrastructure in major cities, thus maintaining the appearance of competing providers.

Under the guise of detailed explanations full of abbreviations and references to terms of use in tiny print or found only on websites, providers claim complete transparency in their price offers and invoices. Meanwhile, consumers are constantly being scanned for their next purchase. Providers cleverly push a system of user points that offer discounts on the purchase of typically expensive electronic gadgets for individual use, provided a credit agreement with the same company. They put an expiration date on the bonus points offered, thus urging consumers to replace perfectly working equipment.

Joana and Hypolite agree to discuss Greta Thunberg's speech in Davos earlier this year with adolescents and adults from the neighbourhood projects they work together with. They note that the final words of that speech were particularly impactful, when Greta remarks: "*Adults keep saying, 'We feel obligated to give young people hope.' But I don't want you to give them hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a time of crisis. I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is on fire.*" Hypolite explains that the communities begin every meeting by asking how they can help extinguish the climate fire. He is very pleased to see that connections are gradually being made with other

similar communities who are also putting aside class and social class distinctions and are working together to make their environment more liveable for all residents.

Joana warns to keep the larger scale in mind. After an evening of discussion, she says: “Representatives of countries make grand promises to reduce the use of fossil fuels, but meanwhile they allow new wells to be drilled for gas and petroleum. They issue permits to mine coal, and even lignite! In the big cities, privileged entrepreneurs and their representatives have adopted the habit of traveling by private helicopter. They rarely use collective underground and overground transports. Instead of curbing air traffic and seeking less polluting solutions for land and water transport, the capitalist credo *Time is money* is used to justify irresponsible forms of travel.”

Joana pauses for a drink of water and then continues: “But they also operate subtly. Thanks to ecological and ethological research into terrestrial biology, scientists better understand animal behaviour and their social communication, as well as how plants in a forest form an interacting whole. Amidst more scientific presentations, television channels are constantly producing and showing documentaries that give animals and plants an anthropomorphic makeover. All human fantasies thus fit into a nature narrative. Even human consumption becomes a natural phenomenon instead of a cultural obligation, imposed by those who benefit. Some of these TV films go even further. The message is that cooperative organisational forms are unnatural for humans, since humans are by nature hierarchically organized social beings. The history of the species falsifies the Darwinian principle by making the survival of the fittest the victory of the strongest. That remains the underlying message. And in my opinion, that is a dangerously incomplete and incorrect argument. Darwin is talking about biological adaptations that offer a species or a subspecies a better chance of biological survival. The social and misleading sociological sauce has been

cleverly poured over it by manipulative figures. Sometimes I have the impression that both in primary school and at university we meet *influencers* instead of guiders of learners to satisfying their curiosity, which effectively leads to knowledge acquisition."

Hypolite responds: "The classic way to dismiss someone who demonstrates something we don't want to hear is to discredit the bearer of the message or to portray them condescendingly as naive and uninformed. I thought of this when I read Greta's speech at a European Commission meeting. There she said at a certain moment: '*Many people try to portray the school strikes as if we're promoting truancy. They imagine all sorts of conspiracies and describe us as puppets who can't think for themselves. They're desperately trying to shift the focus from the climate crisis and change the subject. They don't want to talk about it because they know they can't win this fight. Because they know they haven't done their homework, but we have.*' Well, she's certainly right that attempts are being made to discredit the entire youth movement, but I'm still not so sure about that last sentence. I think a number of policymakers and figures behind the scenes have indeed done their homework. They want to maintain all their privileges in the short term, and that's precisely why they're casting suspicion on young people.

Joana writes to her sister about her conversations with Hypolite following the youth demonstrations related to climate change. Catherine responds:

> *Dear sister,*
>
> *I think Hypolite is right when he says that policymakers did indeed do their homework. They just keep thinking from a different perspective. I heard Greta's speech on the* Extinction Rebellion *on our return home after Mom's death. I think it was a call to action, period. She said, among other things: "We've gathered here today, and in many other places in London and around the world, because we've chosen the path we want to follow, and now we're waiting for others to follow our example. We are the ones making the difference. We, the people in* Extinction Rebellion *and those striking at school for the climate, are*

making the difference. It shouldn't be this way, but because no one else is doing anything, we have to. And we will never stop fighting, we will never stop fighting for this planet, for ourselves, our future, and for the future of our children and grandchildren."

When you hear and read the comments here from political party representatives, the message is quite clear: you're doing politics, and that's not allowed; you have to leave it to us. Some even say: 'Vote for us and we'll make sure everything works out well.' And that, in my opinion, is the most hypocritical part of this. Because many of those who say this have been political leaders for a long time and regularly appear in the news with new negotiations and agreements, but in practice, you quickly sense that everything is being slowed down. And they don't see it themselves, they don't want to see it, or, ergo, they do see it and deliberately keep quiet about it until the next round of talks. And unfortunately, this isn't just related to the climate, but also to ongoing murderous conflicts that always have profit as their underlying motive, whether it's the extermination of Amazonian people or aggression in mining areas in Central Africa. Furthermore, in Europe and North America, migrants who flee their homes for these and other reasons continue to be treated as criminals.

Will we then fail to bring more learners together in learning and living communities? And will these learners, as Greta thinks, join the ranks of those who want to protect the planet, or will they, once they understand how the economic—or rather, the world—order works, try to climb up the hierarchy? I'm sending you a link to an article by Peter Coy about the Bloomberg value numbers [see annexes] assigned to individuals. I strongly recommend reading it. I suspect that the group of top individuals consists of not ignorant, arrogant individuals. And I also think that not everyone who escapes ignorance through learning gains cooperative insights and sees opportunities in the cooperative relationships to build a "convivial society". There will also be many, with the knowledge they have acquired, who will try to improve their Bloomberg value. Perhaps we are too optimistic when we think that the Learning Human is equivalent to the Collective-AND-Individually-Conscious Human.

Have you heard from Grandma Jeanne? I thought, like you did on

your last visit, that she's becoming a bit apathetic. Dad said he plans to visit her in a couple of months and perhaps stay for a while.
A big kiss from your sister, and for little Alexandre too.
I really enjoyed the video of his first steps.

That summer, Paulo spends some time with Jeanne. She's struggling with her health, and together with Anne, he prepares her for a difficult decision. She needs constant care, and eventually everything is arranged for her admission to a nursing home. Then Paulo pops over to London for a while. Catherine is pregnant.
Meanwhile, a new virus is slowly spreading among humans. Suddenly, an infection becomes a global threat, worse than climate change, and all the pharmaceutical companies are called in to find a vaccine.
In the spring, Catherine and Alberto have a baby girl. The parents decide to name her Greta. The international climate-conscious youth movement, in which Greta Thunberg plays a key role, is no stranger to this. Paulo flies to London once more.

During the autumn, with the virus advancing, Paulo learns from Joana she is pregnant again. Alexandre will have a brother, who will be named Francisco. The growing family and the increasingly limited opportunities for his work lead Paulo to question the point of continuing to work and whether it wouldn't be better to offer his services to his daughters and other close family. He resolves to continue working where permitted until the end of April of the following year. During that period, he visits Jeanne one last time. He is just able to return to Lisbon because accommodations are being made for those who book a flight home. At the end of April a *lock down* is in effect in almost all European countries and later on almost the entire planet. Francisco is two months old and Paulo can only visit him because he has a permit to travel to support family. Greta has her first birthday at the beginning of that full *lock down* but it will be months before she can visit her grandfather with her

parents now that travel has been banned due to the virus. Meetings and gatherings are subject to strict criteria and restrictions. Local public transport is implementing strict rules to minimise contact between people.
Steven Bird writes to Catherine that he was in danger of becoming "technically unemployed". After his Airbus stint, he was able to transfer to British Airways. He is now thirty-six and commands long-haul flights, which are few and far between these days. Thanks to his past as a test pilot and his impeccable service record, he can transfer to one of the agencies that began the final phase of testing vehicles intended to replace the expensive space shuttles which were used by NASA until 2011. He says he has a good chance of ending his career as a space pilot.

Shortly after Francisco's birth, Maria de Sousa Dias, professor of Medicine and researcher at the *João Lobo Antunes Institute of Molecular Medicine* dies. She was involved in research on the organised migration of lymphocytes, cells of the immune system. At the age of 80, she was infected with the coronavirus version 2019 AD now widely known as the cause of the pandemic. She knew there was a high risk of death.
She bids farewell in what she describes as an open letter from an optimistic scientist to the next generation: '*I hope to be present through those who remain alive. However painful and sad death may be, life as we know it on earth is not finite. New generations follow one another in cycles, and it is always up to them to continue building our collective future. Being young is partly about being convinced that we can change the world for the better. I am no longer chronologically young, but I continue to believe in an optimistic scenario for the future of humanity! It takes courage to change, especially when our current lifestyle is so comfortable. However, the scientific evidence is irrefutable: human exploitation of nature is unsustainable. We are obsessed with economic growth, but it is not possible for the economies of all countries*

to continue growing indefinitely. I believe it is essential that today's young people become aware of the inevitable short-term risks and make their voices heard, thus pressuring society to change. I believe that science and technology will become even more important in our lives. We need rigorous observations and measurements of everything happening across the planet to be alert and know where to act. But above all, we need new solutions for living in harmony with the Earth: new ways of moving, new ways of eating, and recycling the waste we produce. New solutions to a problem don't suddenly appear out of nowhere. Years of intensive scientific research are needed, and many problems remain to be solved. Regarding the current pandemic, for example, it's important to remember that between 1918 and 1919, an outbreak caused by a novel influenza virus killed 50 million people worldwide. Protective masks, disinfectants, and social distancing were already in use back then, but there were no diagnostic tests, no medicines, and no ventilators. The first flu vaccine was developed in 1940 and administered only to military personnel. It wasn't until 1960, after a pandemic caused by yet another new influenza virus that killed more than a million people worldwide between 1957 and 1958, that vaccination programs were initiated for at-risk groups (i.e., people with chronic illnesses or those over 65). A vaccine provides immunity against a specific type of virus. Now, the influenza virus frequently changes its genetic information, creating new strains that escape the effects of the vaccine. This genetic diversity sometimes also gives rise to more aggressive strains of viruses that cause pandemics. This happened again in 1968, with more than a million deaths worldwide, and just ten years ago, in 2009, with the deaths of approximately 600,000 people worldwide. Because the ability to genetically reinvent itself is a hallmark of all viruses, humanity has always been and will continue to be subject to outbreaks of infections by new viruses. This was the case with HIV (human immuno deficiency virus), which causes AIDS. This new disease, discovered in the US in 1981, has already claimed 32 million lives worldwide. In 1994, AIDS was the leading cause of death in the US for

people aged 25 to 44. It wasn't until 1995 that the first drugs were tested that would become a major success, reducing deaths and turning AIDS into a chronic disease. More recently, in 2003, the first cases of a new respiratory disease called SARS, caused by a coronavirus related to the current SARS-CoV-2, were reported in China. In the midst of a pandemic, society is looking to scientists for effective drugs and vaccines. What lessons can we learn for the future? Above all, new generations must be aware that they face significant challenges. The lack of respect for wild animals, their capture and commercialisation, promotes human infection by new viruses (or other pathogenic microorganisms) that could cause far higher deaths than the current pandemic. Many models still used in agriculture encourage the destruction of forests, disrupt soil quality, pollute, and promote the spread of epidemics in plants and animals. Major natural disasters such as fires, storms, and earthquakes are certain to occur. Climate change is an established reality. There will be a shortage of water and increased pollution. Future societies will rely on science and technology to cope with catastrophes. But current societies insist on ignoring the numerous warnings from scientists about impending dangers that can still be avoided. Therefore, I leave here my appeal to the new generations to put an end once and for all to the illusion that it will be possible to continue living with current habits and doing business as usual. My other appeal is to value and cultivate science. All young people, regardless of their future professions, should be trained to apply the scientific method to the problems they face daily: rigor in observation, logical reasoning in inference, conclusions based on experiments. At the same time, scientific professions must be attractive and desirable. This implies an organisation, infrastructure, and resources that are constantly updated. Finally, a word of caution: all fields of knowledge are equally important. The most transformative technological advances result from discoveries that at first glance seem irrelevant. For the advancement of science, there are no useless research topics, as long as the questions are well-formulated. And science cannot stop progressing. Otherwise, we would not be able to solve the enormous

challenges we face!'

Many of Maria de Sousa Dias's colleagues are helping to distribute the letter, and one of them says: "This text is an important lesson in knowledge and clarity that Mary bequeaths to all of us. This testimony must be read and explained to all young people, in schools, and in families (not to mention adults, government officials, or ordinary citizens). This letter, which is a warning, clearly calls attention to the problems of today and the immediate future."

Catherine and Joana help to spread the letter and make it a topic of discussion in the many *on line* debates they organize with the groups of adults and children they work with. Ester and Joana provide a translation into two variants of sign language for deaf illiterates. They create a shorter illustrated version of the letter to help children with communication disabilities become familiar with it.

Once again, it becomes clear who wields the economic power wants to dominate the entire debate. The heavy reliance on digital forms of social interaction, now that a significant portion of the world's population is forced to avoid physical contact, gives savvy leaders the opportunity to spread a great deal of alarming and often false news. It's not hard to see completely improbable or untrue stories circulating among ignorant individuals who constantly message each other, against which scientifically trained minds, naturally cautious and inquisitive, have little defense. With increasing concern, both sisters observe a hostile atmosphere toward researchers. Reasoning among like-minded individuals often relies solely on information from within their own circles, which is therefore immediately considered unassailable. In some cases, the animosity is so intense that it almost seems like an inquisitorial book burning or a fascist suppression of dissenting opinions is underway, driven by those with flawed, incomplete, or false information.

The virus is being cleverly exploited in many ways and is a good thing for those investing in distance learning and instruction. Suddenly, the proposals in the European White Paper *Teaching and Learning: Towards a Cognitive Society* to seem to appear in the form in which two researchers, de Sélys and Nirtt, in the already cited by Paulo *Blackboard, resisting the privatization of education* warned for. They were primarily referring to adult instruction at the time, but the virus is now apparently also providing a significant impetus to electronically guided instruction for children. Heavy investments are being made in hardware and software to enable more and more children and young people to study in isolation, without lowering enrolment or tuition fees. This new source of income is growing and increasingly includes younger children. Joana and Catherine suspect that the isolating "teleschool" will soon be more socially devastating than Daniel N'Kondo's teleschool experience which Moana described in the previous book.

It is cynical to note that the global pandemic caused by the virus *lock down* makes the climate youth protests partly invisible, while the pandemic is precisely a consequence of the way in which the previous and current adult generations are abusing the planet. During another *on line* debate in which the Demeester sisters participate, a virologist explains why and how viruses spread and adapt much faster under certain circumstances. Poorer ecosystems with an overpopulation of one single species make it much easier for any infection to jump from one biological host to another. In such a case, the overpopulated species suddenly becomes very vulnerable, resulting in a pandemic. Yet, those in economic power are acting as if nothing happened. Ergo, it's not out of empathy that large sums of money are being made available for vaccine development, but because enormous profits are expected from global vaccination campaigns. Bob Claessens's tax-funded tanks are joined by taxpayer-funded vaccines. The contrast with the lack of interest in research and treatment of diseases among populations in

the poorest parts of the planet is appalling.
As scientists and more climate-conscious young people refine their hypotheses in establishing the link between the prevailing economic growth model, the degradation of ecosystems, and the increasing incidence of disease, not only in humans but also in other animal and plant species, the intolerance of arrogant ignorants and non-ignorants only increases towards those who once again highlight the limits to growth. Philosophers, sociologists, economists, and statesmen who take their mandates as representatives seriously clearly sense the threat. The destructive urge for possession is unstoppable. The classic political division into left and right, in place since the French Revolution, has completely lost its meaning. It would be more accurate to speak of knowing arrogants and ignorant followers of the arrogant on the one hand, and non-arrogant, learning individuals on the other. And in this process, the doubt inherent in the scientific approach, even in ecological research, is systematically abused by knowing arrogants.

In the midst of the pandemic, Paulo receives news from Anne that Jeanne has passed away in the nursing home. No one can really say whether she was also struck by the virus, but the funeral service is hastily concluded with her incineration. Paulo and his daughters are unable to attend this final farewell.
As mentioned, little Greta and Francisco spent their first years with relatively little social contact, except with their closest family. Gradually, the pandemic subsided, and walks and outdoor gatherings became possible again. Paulo frequently visits his daughters and spends hours walking with his grandchildren in nearby parks, both in Lisbon and London. He watches with delight as the toddlers explore their surroundings. He encourages three-year-old Alexandre to observe insects and plants, while together they make all sorts of figures with twigs and leaves, as soon as they find a good spot. During these walks, he often talks with his

daughters about dialogue-based education and learning communities for children. He secretly hopes that his grandchildren will have the opportunity to develop their own learning projects within the compulsory education system.

Future plans to completely transition the compulsory education system to distance learning are circulating, but for now, children and teachers meet in person. Joana and Daniel decide to enrol their boys in one of the schools of *A Voz do Operário*. They are drawn to the cooperative working model and the harmonious relationship between the group and its individuals. Its distinct institutional character differs from other initiatives they've visited, which place great emphasis on the individual and make cooperative group work difficult, if not impossible. Shortly afterward, Catherine informs Paulo that she's found a similar school for Greta. Paulo is delighted. He wistfully thinks John would have loved seeing his great-grandchildren in those schools.

Learn or conspire in community?

A few months after the pandemic ended, the family spend a few days together in Maria's native region. During the day, the three children keep the adults busy. In the evenings, they mainly discuss learning communities and developing pluralistic attitudes. They also review the evolution of the school and its systems now the remote banking school threatens to become the new norm, while all instructional rituals remain.

"I recently read a text of yours where you used the words *normality meter*," says Alberto, looking at Paulo.

"I think I know what you mean," Paulo replies. "It was a bit of a provocation to get teachers thinking about 'school success'. Teachers often use belief-based protocols and measurement tools to express a child's 'school success'. Often, they do so rather uncritically. These beliefs stem from an erroneous interpretation of observations and established correlations between a child's age and what is statistically relevant in terms of acquiring cultural tools and skills. Children are compared to an average instead of examining their own development."

"What exactly do you mean by that?" asks Daniel.

Paulo responds: "Think for a moment. Is it necessary to rank a child who is learning to talk, walk, and generally interact with the surrounding reality, among others, to determine whether or not they are certified as normal? You can monitor learning activities based on the observation of a development, but they don't need to be measured based on an observation of that development that has been made into a norm or pattern. And yet, how easy is it to resort to an abusive comparison to demonstrate correct "anomalies" that will make earn less ethical specialists a lot of money?"

Joana then says: "You see it so often in schools. People shift from assessing learning activity to measuring knowledge acquisition.

Measuring! As Dad says, no one seems to laugh at the thought that you can measure the acquisition of general knowledge—that is, quantify it. More. That's precisely why in general primary schools, they don't track that acquisition, but measure the standardised return of the knowledge presented at school."

"The over-schooling of society runs the risk of a general catalogue of children," Catherine agrees. "Ignorant researchers or arrogant, self-important specialists use schools to diagnose anyone's non-standardised development, as if it were a pathological defect. Sometimes these are specialists who want to apply a 'curative procedure' of their own making, using specific teaching materials they hold patents on. In this way, they will guide these children toward normality, i.e., toward the central part of the Gaussian curve they adore." Alberto, listening attentively, then adds: "A critical analysis of recommended practices is therefore useful and necessary."

"And they also strive for collective awareness of the dangers of making decisions that label children as sick simply because they deviate from a norm. Let's prevent schools from serving Dr. Knock," Paulo continues.

Alberto laughs. "You're thinking of that farce where a young doctor with no patients manipulates an entire village so that everyone either has to seek treatment for an ailment or acts as an informant for the doctor who claims that every healthy person is an ignorant sick person?"

"Yes," says Paulo, "and to prevent an entire population from being trained to mediocrity, that collective awareness is necessary. It's better to be careful with norms and patterns when it comes to children and their eagerness to learn."

Catherine responds: "Conscious learning communities can reflect on upbringing and education and offer examples to each other of how, in other group members' professions—whether they be psychology, psychiatry, sociology, or journalism—the danger of hyper-

quantifying the individual is not just a fantasy. A living community, even in school, is not a training group."

"The schooling of both education and teaching also raises other unanswered questions," Paulo continues, "and the simple knowledge that these questions exist should be enough to cast doubt on the view that school is a natural phenomenon, just as universal attraction is."

"And what are those questions?" asks Daniel.

"Some of them are obvious:

- The school not only adopts standards but also always evaluates children based on their shortcomings rather than their existing knowledge and skills. Why?
- It's not knowledge acquisition that's being measured, but the children's ability to reproduce. This is done with tests that assess how accurately children can reproduce presented information. Why? And doesn't this limit creativity?
- Many teachers are opposed to tests that assess reasoning capacity rather than the ability to repeat everything accurately. Why?
- The topics in history and geography change radically depending on where they are taught and tested. Why?

The above and other questions lead to a more general question: what is the connection between evaluation based on deviation from a norm and infantilising children, that is, putting them in a state of *in fans* making them etymologically '*those who have no right to speak*'?"

There is a moment of silence, and then Catherine asks: "Do you remember what Hypolite told you about Cultural Spaces?"

Joana says: "He was talking about that in-between space, a kind of practice space in a closed group for what you intend to do with a larger group or community."

"Yes," says Catherine, "and Dad sometimes says that, as a teacher, he saw the classroom as an interactive cultural space for learning to develop projects collaboratively. Well, I recently read in one of

Harari's books that he sees school as a humanistic project. He says something like, '*Ask any teacher—preschool, elementary, middle, or high school—what she wants to teach her students. The answer will likely be something like, "Well, I teach history, quantum physics, or art, but above all, I teach them to think with their own minds."*. *It doesn't always work, but essentially, this is the goal of humanistic education'*. While I find him very optimistic about what he thinks most teachers will answer, I think there are two interesting aspects in this paragraph: '*I teach them to think with their own heads*' and '*it doesn't always work'* Thinking with their own minds? Why should this be taught, as part of a humanistic project, especially at school? Does this mean that adults generally think that a person, after birth, does NOT think with their own minds? And why doesn't it always work? Is the school instruction itself partly responsible?"

Daniel then replies: "I haven't read Harari, but perhaps he assumes that whoever interacts with children before they go to school generally forces them to think through the minds of others. Perhaps this means that before they even start school, children are doomed to be dogmatised. Perhaps adults without specific training instil beliefs in children that they can be freed from at school by those who work there?"

Paulo notes: "That's roughly Richard Dawkins's point when he discusses the influence of religion that adults maintain in the education of children. And, Catherine, Dawkins, like you, is less optimistic than Harari regarding the humanistic nature of the school. He warns about the fundamentalism of religious groups, especially in North America, who want creationism taught alongside Darwinism, not with the intention of questioning a scientific hypothesis, but rather to impose their own beliefs. What creationists seem to be saying is that they want to 'teach' "all" evolutionary theories, after which the children 'choose' the most sensible theory. But a scientific theory is precisely not a dogma that you either choose or reject. In reality, that kind of school conditions

you to choose one belief among similar dogmas, and that has nothing to do with free will or independent thinking, let alone scientific thinking. Believing you are descended from an original couple created by a superhuman creator, or trying to follow and maintain an evolutionary line of species *or* create understanding based on artefacts, with doubts about the missing parts, for which one develops hypotheses that can be revised at any time; these are not two parallel theories. The first is a specifically religious theological framework for a belief; the second is a scientific method for arriving at a possible, provisionally confirmed theory."

Daniel laughs. "In the same way, it's not the same to believe that the Earth is at the center of the universe, with the sun's standstill in its orbit around it as a divine sign for the chosen people, or to make observations and deduce from them that the Earth revolves around the sun, which in turn revolves around a center of gravity somewhere in the middle of the galaxy of which the solar system is a part. The standstill is a metaphor; the heliocentric model is an observed interpretation of nature."

"Yes," Paulo agrees, "and I think the two undeniable roles of any mentoring educator are, on the one hand, to encourage children to develop, test, and adapt hypotheses, and, on the other hand, to help them develop ethical behaviour. Much of this can be achieved simply by tapping into the curiosity children express whenever they ask direct questions, comment on what they've observed, or talk about something they've conceived."

Joana then says, "A while ago, I participated in a discussion with teachers and educational sociologists." She laughs and looks at her sister: "Sometimes I leave my territory a little bit to enter yours, sister. I remember the intervention of a teacher who claimed to have received the most concise sociological essay on school from a six-year-old girl in his class when she dictated to him a story of her own invention, which went like this:

School Home — Home School.

A girl goes to school… and then goes home.
She leaves home… and goes to school.
The girl arrives at school.
And the girl comes from school and goes home.
And when she gets home…
…she does her work for school.

The teacher said she observed her older sister, which inspired her to write the story. He also said he uses the story regularly and is amazed by the reactions of educational professionals. Smiles and giggles clearly indicate that the girl accurately portrayed school rituals. But, he added, "rarely do people question the provided summary of the instructional grammar of the school"."

Catherine then says, "That reminds me of a discussion I attended about an essay assignment for a national test at the end of primary school. The students were asked to propose a female figure of national or international standing, justify their choice, and add a personal critique. The teachers present debated whether or not 12-year-olds possess the maturity and competence to develop such a proposal. Personally, I'm inclined to say they certainly have the maturity, but perhaps no longer the competence. It may depend on the school they attended whether they are still able to articulate their observations, as that girl apparently was able to do at six. Were they guided to continue thinking independently, or were they, on the contrary, taught to limit themselves to strictly carrying out and reproducing what was instructed?"

Joana says: "For some time now, I've been working regularly with a group of subject teachers at a small school. The lesson schedule for all classes from fifth to ninth grade has been deliberately modified and incorporated into the school's educational project, which was developed cooperatively by all the teachers involved. One-fifth of the school days are reserved for the students to work on their own projects. Any subject is permitted a priori. The students develop a monthly plan. They meet in working groups with colleagues of

different ages and collectively choose the teacher or teachers who will supervise them. Each month of work ends with a kind of mini-conference during which all the project work is presented. In each session, between twenty and twenty-five projects are presented in three or four simultaneous sessions, over two or three afternoons. Everyone is free to choose what they want to attend, and everyone takes turns being a listener and a presenter."

Alberto asks: "And does that work well?"

"Not only does it work well," Joana replies, "but after four years, the diversity of topics continues to amaze and enthuse adults. The idea of specific topics for specific ages, established by the normalising rituals of instruction, is outdated. What the teachers observe more than once is how the intelligent discussion of the chosen objects and topics consistently places the work within the proximal developmental zone of each participant—and now I'm back on my turf, Catherine—regardless of age or prior knowledge of the subject being studied."

"So the intellectual work of individuals can be cooperative group work, conceived, elaborated and evaluated together," Daniel notes.

"But adults have an important role to play," says Paulo. "The line between a cooperative learning community and a collaborating classroom is very blurred. Think about the school Joana is supervising. If the teachers are attentive, a humanistic education free of limiting beliefs is apparently possible, as long as those educational professionals are careful with rituals. It's then possible to speak of individuals working together instead of working for the other. But teachers can just as easily regress and develop a structure in which everyone, as an individualist, is only concerned with their own project and seeks out collaborators, with each person in return offering some of their creativity to others."

"I understand that," says Daniel. "I think that some discussions, including within NGOs as far as I know, regarding the concept of a school for all in a plural society, argue for a change in the school

institution, both in terms of organisation and form. Does this mean that if one looks at compulsory primary school through a phenomenological lens and uses that comparative grammar of education you once mentioned, Paulo, the underlying educational paradigm of every school becomes clear? Can a conscious school community define itself as a locus that encourages either individualism, collaboration, or cooperation? Dialogue with individual and collective partners, with society, clarifies choices. Does one choose to undergo the social transformation situated in one's own place and time? To anticipate it? Or does one consciously choose to cooperate with that transformation? How does this school community see itself? Does it facilitate democratic decision-making, pluralistic interaction, or not? How does it initiate development paths based on the existing diversity within the population? In a broader sense, does it promote pluralistic work processes? How does it view the idea of *telling the world* to use the words of Riccardo Petrella?"

"That seems like a nice provocation for teachers," says Paulo. "What does the teacher want to be? A caregiver or a mediating teacher? A speaking teacher or a listening guide? A specialist or a generalist? A teacher who instructs or inspires wonderment? A teacher providing nice makeup or a reflective teacher? A teacher who informs, who shapes, who educates? A teacher who drives slaves or an author who mentors authors? A 'monologuing' teacher or a teacher who engages in dialogue? A civically passive or civically active teacher?"

"Hmm, Paulo," Daniel hesitates. "Now I think you're being a bit too optimistic. I fear we'll be dealing with a society based on money and commercial exchange for a long time to come. And even with all NGOs' desires for pluralism and diversity, which cooperation should give a chance to, many continue to see the world in black and white. Education remains an act to better those who are bad (badly raised, poorly instructed, bad as workers, etc.), whereby the school punishes the bad guys and rewards the good ones. And even

learners in learning communities can do little to change this."
Alberto then asks: "Should they live on an island? To develop themselves but to be isolated from the evil, dogmatic world?"
"I'm not saying that," says Daniel, "but I fear that in a monetary-economic market based on growth, the cooperative pluralist has little chance of being heard, let alone understood."

During a later summer vacation, Paulo spends a week with his daughters and three grandchildren. Alexandre and Francisco enjoy talking to Paulo about the stars and space. They often stay up until it's completely dark to gaze at the Milky Way together, with Alexandre especially fantasising about the black holes that still greatly capture his imagination. Francisco turns everything he can get his hands on into a spacecraft. His grandchildren's interest in space reminds Paulo of Carl Sagan's books. He remains impressed by how the astrophysicist analysed human stupidity when it comes to superstition and military madness. This stupid ignorance, fueled by arrogance, favoured the creation of impossible scenarios that only encourage new superstitions. Paulo observes the stark difference between the scientific investigation of unexplained phenomena in the sky and the highly productive speculation surrounding unexplained flying objects. With his grandchildren, he tries to separate fantasy from known reality. Sometimes this is unexpectedly difficult, such as when debunking cartoon series full of magical solutions and historical untruths, such as having dinosaurs and *Homo sapiens* living side by side. Paulo often wonders if the infusion of the current dominant societal model into children's fantasy series full of anthropomorphic animals and objects is a deliberate design. Meanwhile, he worries about the future well-being of his grandchildren. The number of nuclear weapons deployed on the planet is currently about one-fifth of the number available when Carl Sagan wrote *Cosmos*, but according to many experts, the risk of nuclear war is now approximately four

times greater than it was then. Much of this has to do with the scarcity of drinking water, the growing arrogance among heads of state, and the proliferation of dogmatically minded groups composed primarily of people convinced they have little or nothing to lose on the planet and therefore don't shy away from apocalyptic scenarios they themselves contribute to.

Catherine has lived in London for ten years now and works primarily with adults whose learning context is a learning community. She proposes to Joana that they synthesise human attitudes in learning processes according to the types listed in the explanatory table their grandfather and father gave them, and to examine how different attitudes and processes stimulate or hinder their own learning or that of others. Joana agrees and brings it up with Ester, assuming that communication, or the lack thereof, also varies depending on attitudes in learning processes. Over the next four years, they will examine the types of figures, forms of learning, and attitudes of learners in a wide variety of contexts.

Catherine writes:

Dear Joana,

It seems we were unfortunately quite wrong when we suspected that the pandemic that temporarily ended last year in the healthcare sector would cause a kind of new pandemic in the education sector.

You probably know better than I do what's happening in the school systems. If they follow the same path as adult education structures during and after the health crisis, then I'd say we're seeing a return to mass banking education in a form even Lancaster couldn't dream of. I don't know if you've heard of MOOCs (the acronym for Massive Open Online Courses). Imagine courses that reach not 1,000 students, but multiples of a thousand. They're sometimes misleadingly called interactive courses, but in practice, they're just as interactive as a classroom lesson where the teacher delivers an oration, answers a few questions, and then sets tests that they correct, sometimes providing feedback. The electronic, software-supported teaching method seemingly enhances that feedback, but in reality, it's about

programmed evaluations that simply measure the deviation between the given answer and the expected standard response. This is certainly interesting for training pilots and drivers, but not particularly useful for supporting reflection in communities. And of course, there's a great deal of interest from large companies and universities, as these are cost-saving programs. Avoiding physical contact between learners may be economically cost-effective, but I fear the social cost will be high. Ultimately, students largely live in isolation, so cooperation in developing individualists once again takes precedence over collaboration.

With the learning communities we work with, we've explored how we can stimulate dialogic learning not only in physical groups but also when working remotely, simultaneously or not. Distance learning is too easily confused these days with "blended learning". In the latter, learning communities use various settings and tools to maintain dialogue while developing self-selected projects. Some of the smaller NGOs I work with use a learning platform called MOODLE, which stands for Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. I was initially somewhat skeptical of this platform. Several universities use it to set up MOOC-like situations with a very hierarchical structure. I asked Dad for his impressions, and he recommended reading two texts he found online, written by a teacher he once met on a plane. One of them is about educational practice and social transformation, and I found it particularly useful. The author clearly demonstrates the difference between the MOOC philosophy and the original MOODLE concept. I would say that Dynamic is the key. The text led me to Brent Parkin. First, let me mention that MOODLE's designer, Martin Dougiamas, talks about the platform and explains he started the project because he was homeschooled via radio as a child and only understood the importance of dialogic learning in developing projects as a university student. Therefore, he wanted to design a non-hierarchical platform where every participant in a project could interact with everyone else, in real time or not. And that's it. Since 2017, Parkin has written extensively about how MOODLE is being repurposed into instruction-based learning models. He speaks from his extensive experience with distance learning in Southwest Australia.

The risks are inherent when interactive platforms are promoted or used by those who fail to recognise the challenges associated with the transition from local learning communities to glocal (local-global-local) learning communities. It's tempting to reduce an interactive platform to an information platform and to limit the participation of those who need to be informed to the simple possibility of responding, joining a forum, or participating in short chats. I found a synthetic table he created. Any platform explicitly designed for persons working together is subject, no matter how, to the vision for its use:

OBJ

Platform use	schools academic	social efficiency	focused on who learns	social (re)construction
criterion for success	ranking	control	satisfaction	influence on progress
learning theory	scholasticism	established standards	constructivist development	socio-cultural
most important role of learners	student	professionals	yourself realization	file community
evaluation forms	text analysis, qualitative	objective, quantitative, statistics	own report	analyse in social network
learning me-taphor	transfer	production	growth	to learn, regeneration

Naturally, in our work, we're primarily interested in social (re)construction, and the MOODLE approach seems very well-suited for this. Participants do need to invest some time in learning to use the instrument. Isn't written language also a communication platform? Shouldn't you invest time in learning to read, in learning to use a language and its tools—a pen, a keyboard? Why do many take for granted learning to use written communication takes time, but not when it comes to learning to use a complex communication platform? Is it too new? It took a while for the fountain pen to become commonplace… And do you remember how, in our childhood, we learned to communicate with the turtle in that strange computer language? Could it be that I take for granted what apparently many supervisors of adult learners do not consider at all, not to mention most university cathedra holders?

How are the boys doing? And are you happy with the school you chose for them? Greta is doing well and loves her school environment. She raves about everything she experiments with her colleagues!

A big kiss.

Dear sister,

Thank you for your letter and the wealth of information about learning contexts for adults. It's strange how university professors so often forget that their students aren't children, but adults, isn't it? And yet they're often treated like immature children. Apparently, those with specialised knowledge have a hard time realising that sharing knowledge doesn't mean the other person isn't a fully-rounded and interested person. Although, interested... I often find that the competitive economic system we live in also influences how young people are steered toward courses they don't choose and don't necessarily want to pursue. Frustration easily leads to reluctance, and reluctance to ignorance, even professionally. Arrogance is often the result.

The children are doing well. They're very enthusiastic about their school, and it's not that difficult to get them out of bed on time in the morning. The entire school population emphasises cooperation, and that's much clearer for the children than for some parents! I'm happy to read that Greta is having similar experiences. And yet, dear sister, we are part of that minority who consciously chose to give our children these kinds of learning experiences. Around me, I see and hear observations about our choice. The most recurring reaction is while doing so we think the children will have sufficient skills in our competitive world. A strange question. Which skills? Those to follow along or those to ask critical questions, I answer. And, dear sister, it does seem that you have to be increasingly prepared to engage critically in a world where there is less and less space for arguments and more and more arrogant statements. How will our Trumpian and Putinian times be discussed later? Not to mention the huge disparities between rich and poor in the most populated areas of the planet, India and China.

Meanwhile, we speak of learning communities when we want to explain the difference between the liberal, bourgeois, and authoritarian concept of a transmissive school and our concept of a humanistic school, but " learning community" is a very polysemous term in school circles these days. In reaction to the exclusionary school, more and more groups and small groups are emerging that

present themselves as learning communities, even though they sometimes consist of pedagogically and scientifically ignorant individuals. Such groups can immerse children in a non-scientific culture that can be very dogmatic. This in itself worries us when we talk about communication, but what truly worries us is we see here and there appearing pedagogical gurus who have seen the potential in preaching such learning communities and are paid handsomely as consultants. Sometimes such a community seems more like a group of conspiracy theorists who are closing themselves off from the rest of the world than an institutional response to the exclusionary state school, while that school proclaims integration. Is it still about learners then? Perhaps just to learn to be an apartment cat, as Glaeser once put it, referring to the ignorant cats who know nothing of mathematics and live happily locked up in an apartment where food, drink, and a place to sleep are guaranteed. What's the most interesting way to live? To be happily held captive, ignorant and manipulated? To wander around unhappy after being manipulated into dogma, superstition, or conspiracy theories? Or to keep asking critical questions and thereby increasingly risk being treated arrogantly by those who manipulate or are being manipulated?

Ester and I have now processed quite a few observations together with the families we observed, and several participatory phenomenological case studies related to communication are almost complete. We aim to have a more general text ready by next year that can also be useful to a wider audience. I'll keep you updated.

When will we see each other again?

A big kiss from Joana.

Joana and Ester Langlauf publish *Hearing deaf and deaf hearers or the art of communicating.* In this article, they explain that as the deaf community emerged from anonymity, the number of resources available to enable hearing people to better inform deaf people increased but the reverse was less evident. This is their starting point. The immediate impetus for exploring this phenomenon was reading the autobiography *The cry of the seagull.* Actress Emmanuelle Laborit shares her experiences as a deaf child in a

hearing world and how she gradually develops her personality while learning sign language. Among the families the two friends work with are non-deaf parents of deaf children and deaf parents of non-deaf children. They both use the book as a guide in parent discussion groups. It quickly becomes clear that the deaf parents have a better understanding of how non-deaf children and parents experience the world than the non-deaf parents have about how deaf people experience science, art, and culture in general. Both non-deaf and deaf people explain that the public pays more attention to translating information to the deaf than the other way around. Non-deaf people often see the inserts on television and cinema with sign language translators and infer that deaf people are now quite well-informed on a wide range of topics. However, the deaf people in the parent groups explain that they only receive information and rarely have the opportunity to ask questions or make critical comments in the hearing community. In all the discussion groups led by Joana and Ester, the non-Deaf participants find that little is being done in translating from the world of the Deaf to the world of the non-Deaf. This often raises concerns that Joana and Ester hadn't immediately anticipated: upon further sharing of experiences, the non-Deaf participants discover that, just like the Deaf, they don't really have the opportunity to question and debate the flood of spoken information. Biologically speaking, hearing and deaf can be antonyms, but socially, they can even become synonyms. Ultimately, Joana and Ester conclude, one should use "tele-information", not "telecommunications", when referring to radio or television. Channels that effectively work in both directions are scarce. Confusion can arise: is someone communicating when giving a speech, as many politicians or teachers say when having a presentation, or is one communicating when engaging in dialogue, as participants are organised in say horizontally cooperative groups? Ultimately, these are two completely different perspectives, and in most of the discussion

groups Joana and Ester participated in, non-Deaf people became more aware of this confusion by sharing experiences with Deaf people about how to engage in conversation with those who claim to be communicating. Joana and Ester conclude the article with several hypotheses about potential contributions from non-hearing people to the further development of communication sciences. They refer to the role of Deaf women in other scientific fields, such as astronomy and pedagogy. They propose more phenomenological case studies involving the working groups that bring together Deaf and non-Deaf parents with non-Deaf and Deaf children, respectively.

Joana can quickly connect what deaf people teach to non-deaf people about communication and all the misconceptions surrounding it with the attitudes of arrogant non-ignorant and ignorant ideal types toward non-arrogant non-ignorant ideal types in the ignorance-arrogance table. She writes to Catherine:

> *Hello sister,*
>
> *The article* Hearing Deaf and Deaf Hearers or the Art of Communicating *Ester and published on the perception of communication has generated quite a reaction. We're delighted to receive confirmation from various sources that case studies are being developed along the lines we suggest. Of course, Ester and I have already made some concrete arrangements. We were both able to interest some of our former professors in guiding students preparing for academic degrees in this direction. That's certainly encouraging news.*
>
> *But we're also receiving other reactions. Some believe we're starting an irrelevant discussion about the concept of communication. That may be true, but it's too early to form an opinion on this. We'll continue to engage with those who advance this criticism and use the scientific rules of argumentation and counter-argumentation.*
>
> *What makes us uncomfortable is that we also receive, I would say, a kind of hate mail from those who see a conspiracy of the deaf in our observation that there's a lack of two-way communication between*

hearing and hearing-impaired people. In these hate mails we sense a more general undertone, where the learner is ridiculed by arrogant ignorant individuals. Such mails contain a renewed plea to isolate all who don't conform to the institutional norm. Anyone who doesn't fall within the boundaries of what constitutes the normal use of all the senses is supposed to be in a kind of ghetto, it seems. And the more extraordinary the "deviation" of a child or adult is, the more extraordinary the education must be. In private institutions, of course, because anyone who claims to see conspiracy in deafness or blindness doesn't see why the community should be responsible for the education of these deviants…

Sometimes it's as if the very act of learning is seen as an abnormality by the arrogant ignorant. And not only in those places around the world where religious or other extremists murder dissenters and burn down schools. Even among us, and as far as I understand, even in a city where large segments of the population like to call themselves cosmopolitan, that fundamentalism is rearing its head again. The Berlin Wall may have become a tourist attraction, but everywhere old walls are being repaired and new ones built: ghettos, gated condominiums, walls between cities and countries, between people, you just name it.

Catherine responds that one can also see outbursts of intolerance in London and that diversity can quickly lead to stereotypical images. Some of her Asian friends say they receive more child protective services calls than European parents. There's an unfounded assumption that because they come from non-European countries, they are more likely to beat their children, while European parents don't. These are unfounded assumptions and prejudices. Isolated situations are extrapolated, in both directions, by the way. Suddenly, it seems as if no one ever abuses a child among European parents. Catherine also says she observes how social media groups, out of fear and anxiety about the fundamentalism of some, capitalise on racial hatred or religious intolerance against everyone. Of course, one can rightly fear

extremist leaders who demand freedom of speech only to curtail the freedom of speech of others, says Catherine. Meanwhile, a form of institutional bullying is underway, in which individualistic, arrogant politicians participate. They don't see themselves as representatives of a segment of the population, but as current or future leaders of the nation, and simply impose their will by making it law.

Just as Loïc Wacquant describes it in *Punir les Pauvres, Le nouveau gouvernement de l'insécurité sociale* (*Punish the poor, the new policy of social insecurity)* Catherine and Joana observe that racial hatred among the white population is greater in areas where there are few or no immigrants than in places where there are. But this is changing now that the affluent middle class and its representatives are fuelling the image of "the dangerous other" by making a few criminals the general representative of an entire population group.

Catherine and Joana try to give their children as balanced a picture of society as possible, making use of the many children's books that emphasise diversity. They also try to avoid applying excessive political correctness to certain phenomena in the name of diversity. They are well aware that the way certain communities assert their rights easily leads to new intolerant attitudes. For example, Joana observes that excessive political correctness in the name of tolerance leads parents and some educators to assert that a child should not experience any frustration. But experiencing frustration is part of every learning and education process, whether it concerns scientific research or ethical and empathetic interactions. Confronting children with personal opinions and guiding them to ensure they express them without imposing them on others is a complex task. Moreover, it is important that children, and often their parents as well, understand that adults play a protective role for the children. Some adults have a hard time drawing the line between protecting and spoiling a child, or seeing the difference between being protecting or subservient.

An authoritarian and hierarchical school system doesn't easily allow for much reflection on this topic, but an unstructured environment can be equally detrimental for many parents of a first or only child. Therefore, creating clarity regarding everyone's role in education and upbringing seems important. For children, learning to co-establish the learning community is a valuable tool. It provides a foundation for getting everyone used to the idea from an early age that co-establishment arises from diversity and that in a learning community, an adult should clearly explain their role to the children, precisely to avoid misunderstandings regarding both hierarchy and regulations.
But both Joana and Catherine are aware achieving this requires more than one generation of developing learning communities, as long as those communities are not abused by those wielding power, whether large or small.

Over the next two years, Catherine publishes several short articles related with *institutional analysis*. She bases this not only on the work she did with Hypolite d'Ailleurs and its preceding research, but also on her recent interventions with the staff of various NGOs in establishing their own working environments.
Catherine still speaks regularly with Steven Bird. He has since completed several flights with a new spacecraft that has been certified as a shuttle vehicle to the two permanent space stations orbiting Earth. One day, Steven tells Catherine that he now understands very well what former astronauts and temporary residents of the *International Space Station* mean when they say that borders don't exist. As soon as you view the planet from the stratosphere or higher, you only see the transition from land to water, and the sheer size that water surface is striking. You can distinguish cities and their edges, especially on the night side, but that aren't borders. You can see obstacles, Steven continues, in the form of natural mountain ranges and waterways, and sometimes in

the form of artificial walls, such as China's Great Wall. But anything that has to do with the outlines of nation-states, kingdoms, or republics drawn on maps is a fabrication in the minds of groups of people.

Catherine notes: "My grandfather John also said that borders are figments of the imagination. He quoted Jacquard, who attributed to Georges Bidault the phrase that borders are the scars of history. Friedrich Ratzel is also said to have said this. And the phrase pops up here and there, even in speeches by statesmen who now consider take borders very *seriously*."

Steven smiles. "Yes, you can use the expression to describe a fantasy of human landowners, but you can also use it as a kind of excuse: they're scars, but they are there, so let's make use of them…"

Catherine then says: "And then a Nation is linked to that and then the Nationalist feeling has to be developed to give everyone who lives within such borders a feeling that those borders protect the collective identity within them and that you can therefore fight for it… And so heroic stories are welcome, such as the invented *Lion of Flanders* by Conscience or the courageous founder of the fatherland *Dom Afonso Henriques* described by Diogo Freitas do Amaral. It doesn't matter, there are choices for everyone, in all the designated areas…"

Steven nods and says: "but up there in space, the whole thing about borders seems more like a fantasy. Or rather, a consequence of our arrogant ignorance. Even the difficulty of traveling from one point to another because of natural dividing lines isn't really visible, let alone figurative lines that aren't punctuated by those natural obstacles. And you know, when you think of borders like that, you think of other borders we draw in our minds, perhaps stemming from our ignorance, a local culture, or a scientific hypothesis yet to be developed…"

"What do you mean by this?" asks Catherine.

"Something that occurs to me occasionally, a bit vaguely at times.

We've long drawn lines between races, and geneticist Albert Jacquard says this is a false idea, given that there's only one human species, and healthy, fertile couples produce equally fertile offspring. *Only breeding and inbreeding lead to specific races*. Another example: there are those who, since time immemorial, have drawn the line between body and mind. Think of Descartes' dualism. Others, however, defend what you might call a holistic approach to human existence. Comenius spoke of pansophy. Contemporary neurologists see it more complexly. We will likely continue to philosophise about the interaction between body and mind, between matter and spirituality, for a long time to come, but meanwhile the supposedly clear boundary is blurring. Consider all living beings on earth and their intelligence—that is, the ability living beings have to analyse an environmental situation and then make a decision. Suddenly you can no longer simply contrast what is called human intelligence with non-human intelligence. This is what neurologists discuss, think of António Damasio, but ethologists also help us reflect on this. The four basic questions for ethologists formulated by Nico Tinbergen are applicable to all behavioural research, including that of humans. And I'll make a small mental leap: big names in theoretical physics and mathematics, such as Einstein, Hilbert, and Erdős, to name just three, reject the idea of a localised mathematics. This shifts the boundary between terrestrial and extraterrestrial. For me, it also blurs the line between terrestrial and possibly extraterrestrial science. If mathematics is universal, then the way it is practiced and translated may differ, but not its use. The ingenuity of those who use it may lead to very diverse technical applications, but that has to do with understanding the mathematics, not with the mathematics itself. Perhaps there is no single best or crowned evolution. Isn't it Harari who says this is a false idea?"

"I've read some Harari," Catherine replies, "and I have something like that in mind, yes. We've strayed a bit from your point about

how we view and experience boundaries, but of course, a lot has to do with what we think we know or have proven. And perhaps Omniscience doesn't exist, except as an unattainable goal. But I want to go a little further. I think that universally speaking, power is an illusion. Place planet Earth in the context of the known universe as Carl Sagan did, and a ruler becomes less than a meager speck of dust. Authoritarian rulers are selfishly meager specks of dust as a result of their ignorance. That doesn't change the fact that they can inflict a lot of harm, locally and temporarily, on those who come under their influence. Economic power is the result of the exaggerated importance placed on owning things and inventions. The idea that there's a dividing line between who exercises supremacy and who suffers it is perhaps the result of poorly explained biology or poorly controlled cultural phenomena. Locally, I think power is a cultivated reality. Is *alfawolf* culture or biology? Is the term *queen* used when describing the egg-laying element in an insect colony culture or biology? Can't an ant or bee colony be described as one single giant family, one mother with all her offspring, with older offspring caring for younger ones? How culturally anthropomorphic are all descriptions of what we observe in nature, even when we work as ethologists? Is human herd behaviour culture or biology? To what extent is biological learning subject to culturally imposed coercive instruction? Individuals learn, but does imposed instruction dominate? The capacity for communication of many animal species, including our own, is planetary. The used languages are local, even among us. Is this related to biological variations, as is the case with aspects of our bodies as a result of evolutionary adaptation to a particular place on Earth? Or is it solely related to geographical range in earlier times? What about the communication of other animal species, not only primates but also whales or dolphins? Do local variations also occur there? And if so, are they for cultural or biological reasons? Is learning universal, but culture not? Is learning universal and

education locally restrictive?" Catherine makes a questioning gesture.
Steven shrugs: "We've strayed considerably. What you just said reminded me of a science fiction book I read, in which one of the main characters was banished by those in power to a abandoned spaceship equipped with a small laboratory because she refused to collaborate in some Machiavellian project. She manages to put herself in a state of suspended animation and is found ten centuries later by two space travellers. She tells them that her body was in suspended animation, but that she was conscious without a sense of time. To avoid going mad, she invented problems and solved them. So she had spent about a thousand years without interruption, thinking only about abstract problems. How much time do we have for pure thought in ordinary life circumstances? It's a nice little book by Clifford Simak, *the Builders of the Cosmos*. If you want I'll lend it to you."

Not long after, Joana and Catherine spend an evening with Paulo. At one point, Catherine talks about her conversation with Steven and casually mentions the SF-story. Then they talk about old school friends. Joana laughs and says, "Do you remember that theatrical sister of a classmate of yours? She's an *influencer* now with esoteric tips for a better life. She has thousands of followers. She seems just as dramatic to me as ever. But she makes a fortune with it. And presume she had not to think for a thousand years."
"How is that possible?" asks Paulo.
Catherine laughs too and says: "*Influencers* publish anything and everything. Gaining a following public is rarely a matter of pure luck. Being present has to do with familiarity, and one gains that familiarity if the posts on social platforms are frequently shared. So it's all about knowing what will be shared oft and quickly. And these aren't mathematical, sociological, or psychological discussion topics, Dad. Often, it's about small trivialities that appeal to young

people and are therefore shared among themselves. Whether the information is scientifically sound or not, that's not the point. If someone says that this or that product or that service brought them balance, and that post is shared enough, then the followers don't question it any further. And when the following take huge proportions *influencers* earn money with it either through what platform owners pay or with advertising revenue from what they promote. They quickly figure out how to make money, whether they're scientifically trained or not. Easy trivialities are eagerly read, often by what you would call ignorant people. Those ignorant people feel better about certain explanations that they blindly follow. Joana can easily explain the phenomenon psychologically. I would say that good *influencers* are the type of learners using their intelligence primarily to make a quick buck. That's not so easy in itself; one really has to be skilled at capitalising on the gullibility of many others.

Joana and Catherine give Paulo some examples of unverified information shared on social media: tips on how to deal with difficult children, for example. He notes how selfish adults can cause dangerous psychological harm to children, especially when the *influencer* portraying them use a pseudo-scientific framework by posing as *expert* of *specialist.* Those last two words cover it all, and expertise is simply accepted as truth by followers. Paulo draws a parallel with what happens in so-called informative programs on radio and television. During these programs, experts pop up without any additional information as to why they are considered experts, while it could simply be someone skilfully making their way into the news. He tells his daughters that he was very enthusiastic when he lived the increasing popularity of the internet in the beginning years. He saw this as an opportunity for more people to not just be passive objects of information, but to acquire authorship. He readily admits that he was once again very naive and that he had severely underestimated the selfish desire to exert influence and thereby

acquire power converted into money. There are also positive developments. He points to the evolution of Wikipedia, which gradually improved co-authorship and inserting warnings when certain articles are not sufficiently substantiated. But, he continues, it seems that when a particular collective information system becomes more firmly established, many users immediately move to new information systems where unverified information is not a problem. Catherine then adds that the internet encyclopedia built co-authorship into its concept, but that this is not the case for fast messaging platforms primarily developed as *app* for individual use on mobile phones or tablets. There's little co-authorship involved here. These are personal or shared messages originating from a single publishing entity.

Paulo laughs and says: “and the number of times a message is forwarded depends largely on its content. I read a few days ago how university researchers, using an advanced technique of high-energy X-rays coupled with Artificial Intelligence (you would say electronic intelligence, Joana) to recognise languages and words, are managing to virtually unravel and read severely damaged and even burned papyrus scrolls that are over 2,000 years old. I don’t believe that posting something like that on social media will get me thousands of followers.”

Joana then says: “These days, we often talk about the learner as a kind of response to the instructed person. But that learner isn’t necessarily the figure of your dreams Dad: the person who comes together with others to cooperatively establish a learning community with the aim of documenting and making themselves heard on certain topics, and thus interacting actively and pluralistically with others. That’s what you like to see, and what you like so much in Albert Jacquard. But the selfish person is also a learner, one who isn’t looking for cooperation, but for new marketplaces to make money. We are not, or not yet, ready for a universal, dialogical learning model. Quite the opposite. It even

seems that we currently find a heightened arrogance that bans informed criticism. Just think of how young people for the climate, or organisations that advocate for the rational and sustainable use of nature and resources are being targeted."

In the spring of 2025, Joana and Paulo are in London. Catherine and her sister launch the magazine *Ignarysis* and therein the window frame 76/121 for ignarometric analysis *[see annexes]*. They thus become the founders of ignarometric sociology. They explain that the framework is an evolution of what Paulo once created without publishing it. The number 121 refers to the total number of cells in the table, and the number 76 to the number of ideal types entered. They anticipate future development.

They further justify the publication of the framework and the journal by stating that there is a need for a tool that helps understand the combined influence of arrogance and ignorance in possible learning models, including the classic hierarchical model that merely transmits information. Joana gives as an example there was certainly growing interest in dialogical learning models until the COVID-19 disaster. These models remain popular in adult learning communities. Furthermore, the mandatory isolation and subsequent reopening of schools demonstrate that national education systems should not be blindly trusted. Both she and her sister observe how distance learning is often promoted as an improved version of what Paulo Freire called the *banking concept*. And this is possible, according to them, because the number of arrogant policymakers is increasing. Their intention remains not to use schooling as a liberating instrument, but as an instrument of enslavement. These arrogant policymakers do this deliberately to be able to act in an increasingly totalitarian manner. It is a little more subtle than brazenly undoing everything that has been collectively acquired and thus securing ownership and power for those who felt attacked. That was General Pinochet's approach, for example, just

over fifty years ago. Large-scale, nationally controlled instruction turns disinformation into a tool and increases the level of ignorance among large segments of the population. Belligerent figures who lust for autocracy can then count on more support than they would from well-informed and critical citizens. Names like Trump, Putin, and Netanyahu are mentioned in this context. But guerrilla fighters and extremists who act out of self-interest, mingle with the civilian population, and thus increase waves of violence against ordinary citizens also benefit from such uncritical or one-sided education and training. Today we truly see "*An eye for an eye will leave the whole world blind"*. When Joana uses the phrase, Catherine notes that several journalists present record it. Therefore, she observes that the words describing the phenomenon are not theirs, but that the remark is often attributed to the pacifist Indian independence leader Gandhi, though some doubt this. However, the allusion almost certainly refers to a line in Exodus in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible '*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*'. That expression is still often used today by authoritarian leaders to strengthen their support among the ignorant. However, Catherine continues, those leaders some of them calling themselves Christians might also consider the passage in Matthew's New Testament where Jesus clearly distances himself from that way of doing things: '*You have heard that it was said "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". But I say to you, do not resist evil, but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also*'. In a sense, says Catherine, the expression attributed to Gandhi is more direct and therefore easier to understand even for those who have had little or no contact with a dialogical learning model. She also refers to this *Jesuist* Mario Pais de Oliveira whom she heard speak about after high school. A few years later, she attended an interview with the priest in which he discussed Jesus' political project, which demonstrated the dangerous intermingling of religious and economic interests in Jerusalem at the time, in the capitalist world today, as well as the

lack of ethics among the powerful temple leaders. Catherine recalls the priest's remark that as long as religions exist, evangelisation is impossible. And, she adds, we may have different opinions on this, but we have entered ideal types in the ignarometric table who approach faith with varying degrees of arrogance, using or abusing theological knowledge in the process.

The ignarometric table is adopted quite quickly by many researchers in the human sciences. The contributions in *Ignarysis* show clearly that it is used for many case studies. Many sociologists consider the table an added value for analysis in phenomenological research, and Joana quickly establishes that *Institutional Anthropogogy* working groups in Europe, America, and parts of Asia recommend using the ignarometric table when describing learning processes in both learning communities and instructional groups.
Five years after the launch of *Ignarysis* the journal's publishers organize the first congress on ignarometry. This establishes ignarometry analysis within sociological research. The Demeester sisters are now quite well-known in the academic world and participate in the conference. Catherine makes a noteworthy presentation during a workshop. Her contribution is published as an article in *Ignarysis* with the title *Common misunderstandings related to dialogical learning.* Joana and Ester are bringing together a group of researchers who are studying the shift from pluralism to integration and from integration to intolerance. They want to set up case studies in the coming years that will examine the diagonal *A -5 I -5* towards *A 5 I 5* of the ignarometric table. With this they want to compile an information bank about cultural barriers and incentives in supporting learning processes towards pluralistic *convivial society.*

While their mothers are attending the congress, 73-year-old Paulo has his grandchildren visiting. Alexandre is now 12, Greta 11, and Francisco 10. Paulo shows them the first drawings they gave him when they were toddlers. Among them there is one with circular

lines and dots, which Paulo says was Alexandre's vision of the universe, based on their many conversations about it while looking at a picture book. Greta leafs through old family albums and involves the boys. They find a travel album with one of the trips from Belgium to Portugal when their mothers were children, containing a photo of part of the Bayeux embroidery. Paulo shows them the " flying star" that supposedly heralded William the Conqueror's victory. They briefly discuss superstition, but then Paulo explains that the flying star might represent a real object, the comet now known as Halley's. He explains as he did with his daughters, that astronomers can easily calculate the comet's orbit and thus know when it will be visible again: "The last time the comet approached Earth, Greta's mother was just under a year old, and Alexandre and Francisco's mother hadn't even been born yet. In 31 years, the comet will be back in the vicinity."

Alexandre then says, "Then I'll be 43 years old and you'll be 42 and 41! So that'll be a while!" He then asks, "Do you still have that book you said I loved looking at when I was little?"

Paulo takes the book from his still quite large library of children's books, but also takes Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* along with some more recent works featuring photographs of space. Francisco then says he remembers often looking at images on the computer. With their grandfather's help, the children record some internet pages to visit on their respective tablets, which they use as students and which also hold their schoolbooks. They tell Paulo they no longer use printed textbooks, but that they have all the information on their tablets. Alexandre and Francisco can also use them to complete their individual and group work and send it internally and wirelessly to their supervising teachers. Greta says she often uses her tablet to look up information on all sorts of things she'd like to know. All three confirm that their teachers constantly recommend consulting different sources on a topic. Paulo tells them that he's interested in what they do and learn at school and that he'd like to

receive photos or texts occasionally. They set up a small exchange group among the four of them.

After the congress, Joana and Catherine spent a few days with Daniel, Alberto, and the children at the family home in southern Portugal. One evening, Steven Bird, who is on vacation nearby, comes to visit them. He had already completed two trips to the moon transporting cargo with materials to establish a permanent base there. During this trip, he met two researchers who say they owe a great deal to James Hogan, Victor Hunt, and Chris Danchecker. Both of the latter are members of a small, select group of scientists. Thanks to the microbiological soil research the group is conducting, progress is now ongoing to quite rapidly making Terraformation a possibility. This will pave the way for permanent alien habitats. Steven understood from the conversation that the moon would be used as a kind of permanent laboratory, given its proximity to Earth. The big surprise, however, is that not Mars, but Jupiter's moon Ganymede is the second candidate for far-reaching Terraformation. Mars now comes in third, and that has more to do with political than scientific reasons. A more remote Ganymede would, among other things, take on the character of a kind of exile place. Anyone causing too much trouble would be "invited" to help establish the remote colony. On the other hand rumours are circulating about discoveries on Ganymede containing information about what may be, or may have been, extraterrestrial intelligence. But Steven hasn't received any concrete confirmation of these rumours. For the time being, he says, he will remain a space pilot for short-haul flights to artificial satellites and the permanent lunar base.

In the following years, Paulo corresponds more with his grandchildren than with his daughters. This happens largely through the exchange group the four of them set up. Greta tells him that she often encounters arrogant teachers at school. She writes

that she sometimes feels like those teachers adopt this attitude to hide their own ignorance or insecurity. Alexandre responds with several examples of what he calls stupid copycat work.

“It seems like you are staying in a medieval monastery where they have to perform monkish tasks,” Paulo jokes.

“Not funny, Grandpa,” Greta replies.

Paulo agrees. “It’s not funny, but it seems that those projects and small investigations they all enjoyed so much in their primary school have now disappeared.”

Francisco says he’s a bit luckier than his brother and cousin: about half of his teachers have a kind of cooperative approach to the curriculum, in which they also involve the students. Paulo recognises in what Francisco writes him a model proposed by an educational think tank of the international organisation he in times consulted for. Back then, the term was *learner agency,* but there was a lot of discussion about who these learners were: the teachers and the students, or just the students? From what Paulo reads from Francisco, it seems that at his school, the group of teachers he’s referring to also considers themselves learners. However, the picture Greta and Alexandre paint shows that the model advocated by many ministries at the time didn’t gain traction. Incidentally, Paulo always had his doubts about the sudden, seemingly universal interest in more dialogical classroom practices. The interest was there, but as with previous adjustments, not for everyone or for all schools.

At sixteen Alexandre rewrote some of his high school experiences. He posts them online in short, self-contained little e-book. Both he and his grandfather are amazed to see how quickly he’s gained a large following of primarily young people. Paulo is delighted to note that many young people still take the time to read more than just short messages or superficial texts. This seems to refute a common perception about young people. Joana points out to him that even ten or fifteen thousand followers don't mean much when

you consider the entire universe of young people using digital media. Greta, who reads all her cousin's stories, echoes her aunt's perspective. She describes the growing pressure of arrogant ignorance she feels, which she partly attributes to politicians. Many of them increasingly consider themselves less and less representatives of the people and adopt an attitude of undisputed leader who acts as they want. To maintain that position of undisputed leader, they act like some of her teachers at school: instead of engaging in dialogue when critical questions are raised, they threaten to act in authoritarian way to mask their lack of real authority. But, she adds, she recommends everyone to read Alexandre's stories. His popularity soars when, shortly after high school, he publishes two collections of the short stories and two novels. He begins a university degree in literature while already holding contracts with a domestic and a foreign publisher for the next four years. This is a highly unusual situation, and his parents support him in shielding his private life from his public life.

When Paulo discusses Francisco's more nuanced experiences, Joana says that not everything is as Paulo hears it. First, as he well knows, Francisco has chosen a very specific direction: he studies music. The entire curriculum he follows differs from what Greta is doing and what Alexandre did in secondary school. All in all, Joana explains, Francisco is in a kind of highly specialised vocational training that starts early, just like the apprenticeships her grandfather supervised. He, too, often encounters arrogant and self-absorbed teachers, but in a master-journeyman relationship. Only a few of the teachers maintain a preceptor-student relationship in which they take on a supervising role. In that case, you could potentially speak of a dialogical approach. The cooperative approach is a group approach only in two or three cases, for the part of the curriculum that deals with general knowledge.

Greta travels alone to Portugal during the summer holidays after

finishing high school. She stays at Paulo's and moves into her mother's former bedroom. She goes to the beach with her cousins and their friends on days with mild UV radiation and when there are no strong winds forecast, which these days often batter the Portuguese coast. She also spends a lot of time at Alexandre's studio. From there, they visit several museums of their interest together by augmented reality. She participates in several youth forums. In these forums, young people try to make their voices heard in the face of the increasingly authoritarian policies controlled by a small group of international political technocrats, while also trying to avoid arrest. Blogs and vlogs are quickly launched and closed, informative videos are distributed. It's often a cat-and-mouse game, and the discussions focus primarily on how to reach and inform the lulled population. That is a very difficult task, because the population, kept in the dark, is increasingly easily manipulated. Populist leaders circulate false information and conspiracy theories on a large scale. The ruling technocrats are taking advantage of this. Greta is seeking kindred spirits who, like her, publish information checks, avoiding any form of paternalism. Alexandre is helping her develop a vocabulary that encourages reflection without pushing them in any direction. They both get along very well with their mothers and invite them to participate in some of the forums to offer advice on learning communities, drawing on their extensive experience. The open communication platform, derived from their familiar MOODLE platform, unites many interested parties who want to learn more about the use of the ignarometric framework.

In the evenings, Greta spends most of her time with her grandfather. They often browse his library. He explains how he finds documents and parts of documents in the database he created a little over thirty years ago and still uses. The library currently contains approximately 3,000 printed sources, consisting of books,

magazines, and dossiers containing articles, as well as a slightly larger collection of digital sources he stores on disk. He demonstrates how he connects the information into logical wholes, also linking to publicly available information online. Greta often continues browsing Paulo's database after he goes to sleep, and she is always surprised by the information he maintains provided by her mother and aunt. One day, she asks him if he's remembering to also save all the personal letters in that database. He replies that he tries, but that at eighty, he often hesitates when using the database and doesn't always remember how to create new maps and relate them to what's already stored. Work is progressing slowly because he's also more frequently reflecting on what's already been saved when revisiting documents. The writing and saving days have turned into reading days, he jokes.

Shortly before Greta returns to London, she asks her grandfather if she can invite a friend to see his collection of children's literature. This is how Paulo meets Catarina Branco. Like Greta, she is committed to making researched information available in her case primarily to children. Catarina is twenty-one and studies the evolution of children's literature. She not only searches for informative children's books but also analyses the content of storybooks and reading books for young children. She immediately gets along well with Paulo and soon becomes a regular visitor. She says that a significant portion of her fieldwork takes place in Paulo's library. One of the key perspectives in analysing the children's books is the way the relationships between the protagonists are depicted. This allows her to group the authors according to who chooses hierarchical power relations among the characters, who incorporates cooperation, and who combines independence with occasional encounters. Moreover, it's also possible to establish a gradation based on the way these relationships are presented. This can involve morally and ethically defending certain forms of relationship, questioning them for ethical reasons, or a critical or

even rejecting attitude toward the relationship depicted. Catarina is also fascinated by exploring the different ways in which the same story is told, where the underlying ethical questioning, whether implicit or explicit, sometimes differs significantly between versions. This variation is very evident in the retelling of fairy tales or classical stories and epics. Even the moralistic tales of La Fontaine or Daudet can take on a different character in retellings. The ethical interpretation in the film adaptation of a 19th or 20th-century children's story, after which the film version is published as a book, undergoes significant shifts. Social analyses have also been adapted for children's stories. These analyses are generally critical, as can be seen in *Don Quixote* or in *Alice in wonderland*, but in their children's version they are often toned down to an exciting or funny story.

Catarina tells Paulo that she would like to provide some kind of information resource about children's literature that she considers intelligent. Paulo then asks if she wants to be an *influencer* for children's literature. According to him, this entails the risk of influencing people's choices instead of guiding them. Catarina believes that danger is reduced if she clearly explains the criteria that lead her to a certain assessment. Paulo says he learned from his grandchildren that following a blog or vlog often has to do with the initial impact such an information channel has on a new visitor. Humor and short, powerful sentences help. Paulo advises Catarina to contact his daughter Catherine. Perhaps she can offer tips on how to gather a broad audience. Catarina writes:

Dear Catherine,

I suspect Greta has probably told you how I came into contact with your family. You may also know that I've been visiting your father weekly for almost two years now. It started with a request to do some of my research on children's literature in his library. Gradually, it became a necessity. We developed a close friendship, and I confess that these days I always look forward to my next visit. I know Paulo

also really appreciates our get-togethers, which have even become more frequent lately.

By consulting hundreds of books, not only in Paulo's library but also in other locations I use for my research, I have developed an analytical framework to identify the books according to their underlying moral and ethical positions and the associated societal images.

I now want to set up an information channel for interested parents and professional childcare workers where they can not only follow my reviews but also get a clear overview of the criteria used. I'm considering a form of communication where interested parties can easily add their own reviews once they're familiar with the criteria. Paulo suggested I write to you. He told me you could help me based on your extensive experience with distance learning communities and showed me some of your publications, all of which he meticulously maintains.

I finish with a personal note. I hope you don't mind. I'm a little worried. I get the impression that Paulo has been less alert these past few weeks and is more melancholic than I'm used to from him. It started with listening to old records. He showed me a few from his collection and let me play a few. These days, he often has Theodorakis' oratorio with lyrics by Pablo Neruda on it. He told me he's had the record since 1975. He keeps talking about his father and his Chilean friend and how both families went to a performance together in a concert hall in his hometown. If that record isn't on, it's the piano concertos by Bach and Mozart or the symphonies of Beethoven. Every now and then, he lets me hear works by a composer from his hometown, with whom he apparently has close ties, or by Francesco, whom I've also recently become acquainted with personally.

I hope you don't mind me expressing my concern. It might be nothing, but I know from Greta how Paulo tends to withdraw from the outside world, so I wanted to share this with you.

Kind regards,

Catarina

Dear Catarina,

Thank you very much for your letter. I'm sorry the reply took a while. I had to think about what you wrote. First of all, I don't blame you for expressing your concern at all. I immediately contacted my sister, and she confirms what you're saying. Our dad has always had a tendency to be a bit self-effacing, especially when he suspects he's not being taken seriously about something he thinks or says. Now that he turned eighty-two a few months ago, he must have decided for himself that he is no longer useful to others. His sister told me he'd been unhappy for a while that he can't always keep up with his grandchildren.

I emailed him myself now and told him that a long-time friend, a space pilot, was visiting us. He told us about the first settlement on Mars, consisting of a group of six people. I know Dad has always had a certain fascination with extraterrestrial travel, both real and imagined. I suspect he also showed you his collection of SF stories at some point. I casually mentioned that Steven, as our friend name is, is coming to visit us again in February and asked him if he'd like to take a trip. I arranged with his Belgian cousins that they would visit him, travel to Belgium with him so he could see his sister, and then put him on the train to London. Everything has been arranged now, which is why it took me a while to reply. Paulo's cousins will be visiting him at the end of January, and they'll travel there together on February 1st. Paulo will be away for most of February, so you'll be kept informed.

Regarding your more professional question, I think Dad is exaggerating a bit, as always, when he talks about his daughters' knowledge. But I'd be happy to help if you think I can be of any use. My sister and I are meeting in the spring, almost certainly in Lisbon. I'd like to involve her in your project. So I propose we meet in April. Is that feasible for you?Kind regards,

Catherine.

A charter of the learner

In January 2040, it's cold in Oostende. There's a constant storm. Paulo's cousins, Sebastiaan and Alan, have to rebook their trip twice before they can leave for Lisbon. They finally arrive at Paulo's place only on the twenty-seventh. In Lisbon, the bad weather is barely noticeable. The air is clear. But Paulo is still a bit worried, less about the outward journey to Belgium since he has company, but more about the return trip. Sebastiaan tells him not to stress. If necessary, he'll ride with him to the airport and make sure he has a helping hand from a fellow passenger or a hostess. Besides, Alan laughs, there's no point in worrying a month in advance. During their short stay in Lisbon, Sebastiaan and Alan visit Joana and Daniel. They also visit the young family, Francisco and Amy Matisse, and their three-month-old baby, Paulo N'Kondo. Francisco surprises them with what he calls a private recital, where he and three friends perform several pieces for string quartet composed by Francisco himself. Alexandre has other news. His British publisher has an agreement with a Dutch publisher, and three collections of his work, already translated into English, will also be published in Dutch. Joana says she's delighted that both cousins are coming to pick up Paulo for his trip to Belgium and London. At first, he was rather negative, but now he's actually looking forward to his trip.

Three days later, uncle and nephews are on a plane to Belgium. The landing is a bit chaotic. The wind is stormy again; there was even talk of diverting to Cologne. But finally, they're safely in the entrance hall. They walk to the train platform and shortly after, they depart for Oostende. Paulo is enthusiastic about the new trains. They seem to float over the tracks. He naturally has to try out the ordering system for the dining car and is thrilled when, shortly after entering the information on the communication panel integrated into the tabletop, he sees the waiter appear with three

excellent coffees and pastries. His nephews explain that after previous campaigns that weren't very successful, the railways are now using all their charm to get people to switch from individual transport to public transport. This evokes images of the dining rooms in luxury trains from the first half of the last century. Sebastiaan adds, however, that he assumes that the underlying intention of the central government of Greater Europe is to maintain control over the citizens' movements. Along with the charm operation, the tax on motorway use has risen so sharply that people are choosing to work from home or live near their workplace if they don't want to use public transport and can't afford road taxes. Alan closely follows economic developments and trends and explains to Paulo that more and more investors are withdrawing from the individual car industry. The focus for individual consumption today is primarily on electronic equipment and installations for individual energy generation, and of course, as Paulo has long known, everything related to the instructional industry. Sebastiaan notes that Francisco and Amy's son, and any children of Alexandre or Greta, will likely only buy or rent electronic services when they reach school age.

Paulo remembers from his childhood that weather conditions on the coast are often different from those ten kilometers inland, just like now. He's glad it won't rain for the next few days. The wind has also dropped to a more bearable speed. He walks through the city with Anne, and the brother and sister busily reminisce about their childhood. He's very happy when he boards the train to London a week later. A few years ago, the service was modified. Two trains, one from Oostende and the other from Antwerp, coming from Amsterdam are combined into a single set in Brussels. Ostend-London no longer requires a change. Furthermore, passport control takes place between Brussels and the stop at the entrance to the Channel Tunnel, which has virtually eliminated waiting times for embarkation.

Sint Pancras Station looks different than Paulo remembers from the time he regularly visited London during Greta's toddler years. He feels thrown into a scenario of some futuristic films he used to watch. That was when television still had a selection that appealed to him. Nowadays, film and fiction can only be seen by *pay-per-view*. The few left over open channels broadcast information programs alternating with reality shows. He stopped looking because he can't see much difference between the two categories. For years, he's been paying for a kind of mandatory minimum package that is tied to his internet connection rental. His TV is now only used to watch the few movies he occasionally wants to see on the old DVD player.

He slowly walks down the platform and descends into the large entrance hall, where Greta and Catherine are waiting for him. Together they take the tube west, and less than half an hour later, they arrive at Catherine's house.

Catherine tells him about the magazine *Ignarysis* now in its fifteenth year and increasingly contains contributions from all areas of the humanities. The next day, they visit a learning community in which Catherine is involved. She tells him that she will be a visiting lecturer at the University of London next year, where she intends not only to highlight but also to practice dialogical learning.

Two days later, Catherine, Alberto, Paulo and Steven Bird go out for lunch at a restaurant.

"It's been a while, Paulo," Steven begins. "I don't think we've seen each other since Catherine and I finished high school and you asked me if I met all the requirements to become a professional pilot."

Paulo hugs Steven and says: "and from what I know from my daughters, you've switched from local flights between Cascais and Torres Vedras then to local flights between the Earth and the Moon today."

Steven laughs: "Yes, I've been a short-haul pilot my whole life, except for a brief transatlantic stint, which was interrupted by the

Covid pandemic. What I look back on fondly is my years in Toulouse. When I was hired there as a test pilot, I really learned to fly. What I mean by that is that I had a tremendous learning experience there, not only in getting the most out of a large, heavy aircraft, but also in staying calm during unforeseen developments and being able to make quick analyses."

Catherine then replies: "That's what Alberto and Steven have in common. They make very good analyses. But Steven does it incredibly quickly, while Alberto takes weeks."

"Steven's analyses are somewhat different," Alberto chuckles. "For him, it's a matter of immediate safety, while my analyses are designed to provide him and his colleagues with greater long-term safety."

"Can you explain some more," asks Paulo.

"I'm still working on self-learning electronic intelligence," Alberto replies, "and right now I'm part of a team developing and testing autopilot systems that assist human pilots in rapidly changing environments. On Earth, this primarily involves unstable weather conditions and sudden mechanical or electronic problems, sometimes caused by the automation itself. Off-Earth, it involves analysing and responding to undocumented anomalies by developing escape and protection scenarios based on previous potentially similar situations, in cooperation with human pilots. Speed of communication is crucial in this regard, so a great deal of attention is paid to verbal communication between biological and non-biological intelligence."

Steven then says: "Nowadays, launching spacecraft has become a less risky operation. The *checklists* for taking off are naturally more complex than those of an aircraft that only climbs near the tropopause, but nowadays a small crew of two pilots and three ground crew members can handle the job. For space flights, the danger now lies outside the Earth's atmosphere. And thanks to the work of crews like Alberto's, the Earth-Moon connection is almost

as safe as a shuttle connection between two regional airports. Flights to Mars and the moons of Jupiter still pose greater challenges. Today, we are testing spacecraft build in space. It seems counterintuitive, but we are already establishing that they are potentially safer than vehicles built on solid ground. Those spacecrafts do not take off from or land on planets. Therefore, they do not experience the stress of flying through the atmosphere at high speed, and they are also less affected by gravity. I predict that by the end of the century, shuttles will serve only between solid ground and spacecraft. And perhaps the profession of space pilot will then become completely different from the profession of shuttle pilot."

"Something different now," says Paulo. "Catherine told me you once confided her that terraforming experiments started sooner on Ganymede than on Mars. Yet, a small team has now been sent to Mars. Change of plans?"

"I can't speak entirely freely," says Steven. "What I can say is that the first steps are being taken on Mars today to initiate Terraformation. But it might take a century or so before we can truly speak of Mars colonisation. For now, it looks like they'll be using the same technology as on the moon to build semi-subterranean installations. The plan is to use heavy explosives to create artificial caves during the preparations. Regarding Ganymede, I can only tell you that they're working differently. But that's mainly because of the research led by Victor Hunt and Chris Danchecker a good ten years ago. I can't and shouldn't tell you much more, but if you're interested... Victor's spiritual father has published several fictionalised stories partly based on their work, so if you want to read between the lines in fiction to have some idea of reality… go ahead," Steven laughs.

After dinner, Paulo, Alberto, and Catherine visit Greta at the university library near Russell Square. They drive home together.

Paulo tells Greta that on his previous visits to London, he often walked into Bloomsbury from Saint Pancras Station. The Waterstones bookstore on Torrington Place and the *British Museum* were then regular stops.
The next day, Paulo takes the train back to Oostende. There are few people in the two carriages that will be uncoupled in Brussels for the journey to Oostende and the seat next to him is free. He reads some time in the *National Geographic* magazine he bought in the station hall, featuring a series of articles on Neanderthal culture. As the train enters the Channel Tunnel, he falls asleep.

The brief stop on the French side of the tunnel entrance is only to allow the customs officers conducting the passport check to embark. The officers entering the compartment see that Paulo has slumped slightly and that his magazine has slipped to the floor. One of the officers bends down to pick up the magazine while quietly asking for Paulo's passport. There's no answer, and the officer touches Paulo's shoulder. When there's still no response, he takes Paulo's wrist, which feels lukewarm. The man is startled. Then he calls his colleague while trying to check his pulse. His colleague calls out through the carriage to ask if a doctor is nearby. No one answers, so he uses the intercom to request a doctor for Paulo's seat. The doctor who arrives can only confirm that Paulo has died and that resuscitation is no longer possible. The officers consult with the conductor when they determine Paulo's final destination is Oostende. Among his documents they find Anne's address and phone number. She is informed of what happened. She contacts Joana and Catherine, who are deeply distressed. A few days later, Paulo's daughters and grandchildren are in Oostende to attend the scattering of ashes at sea.

Six months after Paulo's death, Greta arrives in Lisbon. She is preparing her final thesis. She has decided to address an aspect of contemporary educational history: she wants to investigate the rise

and development of learning communities from the 1980s to the early 2030s. She has already interviewed Anne Demeester extensively and four of her mother's colleagues in London. Now she wants to visit her aunt and interview Hypolite d'Ailleurs. Joana advises Greta to research Paulo's library because she suspects she will find a great deal there about learning communities and their history in both institutional and non-institutional contexts.

Greta moves into Paulo's house. Not long after, Alexandre gives up his studio and moves in with Greta. Together, they begin an extensive catalog of Paulo's library, building on what he had already begun. Francisco and Amy visit occasionally. The cousins use these moments to document their memories of Paulo. They often talk to Joana, and Greta has long video calls with her mother whenever she and Alexandre find letters or photos they'd like to explore, especially those from the period leading up to Maria's death.

Meanwhile, Greta continues working on her thesis to obtain her degree in educational history. She tells Alexandre about the interview she conducted with Hypolite. His analysis is not at all optimistic. He discusses, among other things, the pernicious role of social communication, which he ironically notes is often apparently provided by antisocial communicators. Under the pressure of the spectacle industry, news coverage increasingly resembles a series of action movie sequences. About a hundred years ago, Orson Welles said that his radio broadcast about a fictional alien attack had not intended to sow panic. Today, it seems that news coverage does have that intention. Panic and fear, says Hypolite, are, after all, effective tools for keeping an unsuspecting population occupied while simultaneously convincing them of the need for increasingly aggressive attitudes toward potential danger. It suggests that democratic decision-making is too slow to address dangerous situations that can quickly escalate. The idea that the people would be better off with authoritarian leaders is heard more and more

often. Hypolite believes that arrogant authoritarian regimes are not currently advancing faster simply because a portion of the population still wants to learn as much as possible. At all times it is implied that such learners could be dangerous to humanity itself, because they question generally established and accepted societal values. The manipulated ignorants portray well-informed critical individuals as pedantic. Greta and Alexandre observe that those who oppose governments often adopt the same arrogant attitude as those they are primarily criticising. It is becoming increasingly difficult to gain an accurate picture of what constitutes manipulation and counter-manipulation, and what can be considered correct information. Even in academia, Greta explains, there are those who are not afraid to spread dubious information to gain public attention, committing plagiarism in the process. The group of arrogant academics is growing as private investment takes precedence over public investment. What was once called the temple of science, says Greta, is rapidly becoming a swamp of banality and unverified pseudoscience in several areas. Dogmas don't need large international institutions these days to quickly attract significant groups of intolerant followers. In this kind of academic world, defenders of opposing hypotheses increasingly resemble hooligans kicking up trouble rather than discussing opponents. The political world puts on the same kind of spectacle, and the loudest shouter of the biggest banalities gains the followers. Greta says she sees increasing signs of sharp control in general schools, where dialogical learning was still the model. Many national school systems are moving away from the proposals made about twenty years ago concerning *learner agency*. Ministries are once again promoting instructional schools and strong central oversight of the implementation of the approved curriculum. This only increases the resistance of learners in learning communities to the arrogant disinformation and manipulation, and the result will sooner or later erupt in even more violent backlashes.

A year and a half later, Paulo Demeester's library has been completely cataloged. Greta and Alexandre have taken some time to distill some stories from their conversations and references. Thus, in the summer of 2042, Greta can publish *The Library Tales* thanks to the many writing tips her cousin gave her. Greta came up with the idea for the collection after Alexandre shared his childhood memories, which often took place in the library's children's book section. Her cousins also found several imaginary letters to his grandchildren, which Paulo had saved on a computer. She incorporates some of these letters into her stories. Children's books play a role in these stories, such as one about an elephant who loses his trunk, or a red chicken whose friends leave her all the work but later want to profit from it, or a touch-and-feel book titled *That's my owl.* These booklets evoke memories for all three. Greta returns to London just before the collection's launch, after which she also defends her final thesis.

Alexandre will continue to live in what Paulo's grandchildren call "the library house", intending to open it to anyone who wants to consult documents. He has since met his fellow writer Manuela Neves, who is moving in with him.

Another year passes. Greta has, against all odds, managed to secure a small flat in Bloomsbury, near the college where she teaches future educators. Hypolite is visiting her parents, and one evening Catherine calls her. Steve has also shown up, and would she like to join them for dinner the next day?

The reunion between Hypolite and Greta is cordial. He tells us that he and Joana recently visited the library house. Over the past year, Alexandre and Manuela have spoken to quite a few young people interested in learning communities. Just before he left for London, Alexandre and Manuela had a daughter, named Alexandra, but Greta, of course, already knows that. Hypolite then tells he plans to settle permanently in London. This is partly due to Catherine. She

referred his name when asked who she could recommend to facilitate a learning community of people who want to tackle regional projects in certain African countries of the former Commonwealth. He doesn't yet know all the details. Broadly speaking, it seems to be a dual task. In London, he will facilitate a dynamic learning community composed of people involved in one or another project and coming to London for shorter or longer periods to critically analyse their own projects together. Furthermore, he will have access to the necessary technical infrastructure to participate in local learning communities in the African countries involved, if a group so wishes, and to intervene remotely.

"Actually, Hypolite's presence is a kind of guarantee against neo-colonisation," Catherine provokes.

"I hope it's not just that," says Hypolite, "but you can bet I'll withdraw with the necessary reasoning if I sense there's a risk of this happening. My initial impression, however, is that the NGO that approached me gives me free rein to fully examine every project discussed in the group and investigate which stakeholders might support it."

"A delicate task perhaps," Steven suggests. "So far, it can't be said that the exploitation of the African continent has decreased. And I'm not just thinking about the attitude of economic groups in the Northern Hemisphere, but also that of local dynasties and oligarchies. Just look at the rulers of the former so-called oil states and what they did when local petroleum extraction gradually became depleted. Over the past twenty years, the search for minerals and rare earths has spread across the continent like a virulent disease."

"Not only that," says Hypolite, "projects are now being labeled sustainable and small-scale, and are being foisted on the poorest populations of several sub-Saharan countries when they're actually about recovering often toxic materials from discarded objects. The

word “sustainable” is cynical, because the project’s sustainability is solely related to the continued forced consumption in the Northern Hemisphere.”
“Does that mean that the big interest groups never actually stopped colonising Africa?” asks Greta.
“Africa, parts of Asia, South America, and any other part of the planet where investors know they can make money,” Hypolite answers. Despite all the protests, despite the overground and underground actions of ecologists, youth movements, and people in general who are aware of the far-reaching degradation of ecosystems, the arrogant seizure of our planet by that small summit on the *Bloomberg* value scale just keeps going. As throughout history, they're making agreements full of secret addenda and plenty of loopholes. Your namesake Greta Thunberg and the new generation of young people who succeeded her are trying but the repression against them is only increasing as governments worldwide increasingly erode democracy. Although, democracy… you might wonder if it ever existed…”
“You’re being really negative now, Hypolite,” says Alberto. “Don’t you agree that after the Second World War, a hundred years ago, we were working on more democratic forms of government in a positive way?”
“I doubt it, my friend,” says Hypolite. "How quickly did canvassing votes become the primary concern of those seeking to install governments that favour them making their primary activity to smear every rival candidate?”
Steven nods.
“I’ve always wondered why, since the World War, but actually even before, it’s always the heads of government who pretend to negotiate agreements on behalf of the nation-state they govern. According to the strict rules of democracy, heads of government should merely be executors of policies developed and adopted by parliaments. Parliament represents the voting public, not the

government. Almost never is there a discussion about the legislative bodies that must ratify agreements and why this is so. And when it is discussed, it's often to hint that such a cumbersome procedure actually hinders any progress. This opens the door wide for those who arrogantly seize power 'in the name of the people'. I see two camps: a dishonest camp and a paternalistic camp. The first simply claims to govern and decide in the name of the people. Those who belong to this camp engage in a game of yes-or-no with the legislative parliament, controlled by pro-government representatives, which seemingly makes serious legislation impossible. Meanwhile, the decisions taken serve the major economic groups, often in the name of a majority that is itself manipulated. And then you have the paternalistic camp. Those in this camp adopt an attitude of 'we know how to do it, we'll take care of you' instead of explaining, arguing, and allowing each of the representatives in parliament to effectively represent the people who elected them. Paternalism is just another form of arrogance. And a government that emerges from it is just as dependent on interest groups to remain in power. Both camps consider themselves potential holders of power and interpret the concept of democracy as a kind of ritual arrangement for changing camps to govern. Few accept the temporary nature of representation. And that is precisely because they don't see themselves as representatives, but as holders. Naturally, things go wrong when some members in either camp become even more arrogant and no longer want to alternate power, for whatever reason. Then the recruiters emerge, operating with lies, disinformation, and insinuations. They are looking for the voice of one who was once silenced but is now falsely caressed with phrases like '*In democracy the people have the final say'* Pessimist? Yes, if this is the democratic model."

Catherine then says, looking at Steven: "A few years ago, we had a long conversation about the artificiality of borders. Aren't borders an excellent tool for those who want to bring democracy to

particracy and from there to oligarchy? A confined space where one can cultivate nationalistic sentiments among a population that doesn't know much…"
"That hypothesis could almost pass as a conspiracy theory, Mom," says Greta, "but… yeah…"
Hypolite laughs: "But you actually think you can agree with your mother!"
Now Greta also laughs: "You are a reader of thoughts."
Hypolite then says: "I didn't know you two had a conversation about borders. Was it about that famous quote about the scars of history?"
Steven nods: "It was when I was talking about my experiences as a pilot in the stratosphere and higher, when you observe the Earth from that height."
Hypolite nods: "I understand the context. And, Greta, I think we need to put your mother's hypothesis in a broader context. I would use the power resulting from the urge to acquire wealth as a starting point. Anyone who experiences such a development of power will use any means to achieve their goal. Using national borders to define a sphere of action is a good strategy and can form the basis for further expansion. Don't forget that truly large and powerful players love the United States and Confederal Organisations of Nation-States."

Over the next few years, Hypolite and Greta would frequently cross paths. Gradually, Hypolite settled permanently in London, while Greta spent more and more time in Lisbon. When she manages to rent a spacious studio apartment next to the library house where Alexandre lives with his family, she becomes an almost permanent resident. Greta is introduced to the college where here aunt Joana herself was once student. She is hired as a teaching assistant for a semester-long postgraduate course taught by her aunt. The course was designed as a learning community where each

participant brings in one practical experience. Each of these experiences are examined in a group, focusing on communication and the underlying relationships within each case study. After only two years of the course, Joana and Greta already know that most of the participants are facilitating some kind of learning community themselves. Many of them report to feel a subtle sense of manipulation in the composition of the groups they are working with. It seems as if there is pressure to limit themselves to the world of the well-off and not to mingle too much with the general public. Their field of work is primarily within the frameworks of service companies, NGO staff, students and student groups from more prestigious fields of study. Those who choose to facilitate consciousness-raising learning communities, such as those within youth groups or critical ecology and sociology think tanks, run higher risk of being held in suspicion. Some participants bring practical examples with them precisely in order to learn, through analysis, how they can continue to support critical thinking without falling victim to physical violence or psychological pressure.

It remains disturbing to see how ecosystems are being further destroyed on a global scale. Very limited global measures are presented as groundbreaking, obscuring the fact that over the past three decades, the threshold for critical temperature rise, resulting in unsustainable atmospheric changes, has been raised again and again. People themselves are becoming increasingly vulnerable. Half-finished and sometimes dangerous scientific programs of genetic manipulation are experimenting wildly to make ecosystems habitable again.

There's an official discourse that learners should be given more credit, but meanwhile, people talk about learning islands, study domains, and specific development areas in which learning communities are useful and necessary. "Defenders" of this way of work point out that their widespread adoption though poses a grave threat to… democracy; subtle or not-so-subtle manipulation, in

other words.

After the spring semester of 2045, Joana Greta announces her intention to develop an explanatory guideline, a kind of Charter of the Learner. It is necessary to clarify the conscious consciousness-gaining nature inherent in a learning community, she says. Today, the term is too often used deliberately misleadingly, she adds. In this way, she wants to clearly separate the concept of a human learner from that of a human instructed and that of a human manipulated by schooling. Greta says she would like to help formulate such a charter. She will be in London for the next few months, but working from home. She is pregnant. Her son is due in September, and until then she wants to take it easy. She is overjoyed to become a mother but refuses to reveal the father's identity. She says only that both parties have decided that Greta will raise her child as a single mother, discreetly and anonymously assisted by the father.

A few days after her return home, Greta receives the following email from her aunt:

My dear cousin and colleague,

Everything okay with you? And the baby you're expecting?

I am gathering my thoughts regarding the Charter.

Defining the learner begins with defining learning, I believe. I don't intend to offer an absolute definition. I would simply try to situate the terms used within our specific context. I don't want to sound arrogant :-). For us, learning is a broad concept; it's not limited to undergoing formal education. Just as we don't limit formal education to attending school.

In our case, learning is our ecosystemic interactive approach to understanding; you know, that approach we try to clarify with all the connections a group makes in that game where we unravel tangles by throwing them at each other. In such an ecosystem, both human and non-human elements have their place. Education is one aspect of supporting understanding, of learning. Various aspects and elements play a role in an ecosystem. The human elements have a specific

function. These functions are not exclusive. Someone who mediates at one moment may need mediation at the next. Learning is interaction, it is reciprocal. In a learning process, all participants are co-authors. That is our interpretation of Learner Agency.

We speak of the human being as learner when that interaction and co-authorship are recognisable in a temporary or less temporary structure that we call a learning community. Such a temporary learning community acts cooperatively. A longer-term learning community acts pluralistically. In our approach, we view pluralism as an interactive process. In our view, pluralism has nothing to do with minority versus majority or consensus. Pluralism involves an attitude: after clarifying concepts, a platform emerges for dialogical interaction, thus for dialogical learning. Pluralistic interaction leads to a deeper understanding of science and the scientific principle of falsifiability. Pluralistic interaction sees every hypothesis as a possible working model but only considers it a theory when experimental and observable evidence can be provided, with the falsification being a permanent goal. Therefore, from a societal perspective, democracy cannot be equated with pluralistic interaction. In democracy, one accepts the existence of a majority culture in a given space and time, and may be tolerant of other cultures. Tolerance is a compliant attitude, not a pluralistic one. In our view, an integrating democracy is less open to other cultures than a tolerant democracy. And in that sense, we believe that a culture that demands tolerance of other cultures, including through the use of violence, can ultimately be democratic, but never pluralistic. In other words, a society that accepts the majority principle, if it wants to be called democratic, cannot help but accept that at any moment the majority can become the minority, and vice versa. A tolerant democracy may have less difficulty with this. Governments of integrating democracies will more readily resort to violence to defend the culture of the existing majority, while frustrated individuals from a minority culture will also more readily use violence.

But, as I said, for us, pluralism is an interactive process that has nothing to do with democratic decision-making. I think I once showed you a forty-year-old definition by Diana Eck. She wrote: 'The

language of pluralism is one of dialogue and encounter, of give and take, of criticism and self-criticism. Dialogue means both speaking and listening, and this process simultaneously reveals shared insights and genuine differences. Dialogue does not mean that everyone 'at the table' will agree with each other. Pluralism embodies a commitment to being at the table—with your own commitments.' For me, there is the underlying idea that pluralistic interaction in learning communities ultimately leads learners to the ethical attitude of not using the implementation of their own commitments to prevent others from implementing their own. Understanding the reciprocity of this principle is inherent to the learner and difficult for the instructed or the manipulated to grasp.

This ethical stance requires a long process of awareness, especially for those who are power-hungry. This is necessary because today's liberal-capitalist consumer society, perpetuated by large interest groups, is a breeding ground where, through constant pressure, the learner can easily become the manipulated, but where it is not so easy to invite the manipulated to become a learner.

What do you think?

Kiss from your aunt Joana

The same day Joana emails Catherine:

Hi sis.

I sent your daughter some thoughts about the idea of drafting some kind of declaration of principles, a charter of the learner. She's probably told you how the first two editions of the spring semester we're organising together in the form of learning communities gave us more insight into how the terms "learner" and "learning community" are used, and in our opinion, abused. Instructional groups become learning communities, and guidance often clearly transitions into manipulation. This is, of course, easier to see in school systems that adapt to fashion trends, and you could say that "the learner" in schools was the fashion trend during the first half of our century. The underlying expectations of institutional pedagogues and anthropogogues that learners and learning communities would promote critical thinking have been met only very rarely. The catch-up

by those who attentively followed evolution and saw it as a threat to the established order was effective. In some nation-states the majority principle is applied by authoritarian means and bureaucratic repression or even physical violence was the answer, as we well know. In other nation-states, rulers responded more subtly, encapsulating or gradually reshaping learning communities.

Sister, I've reviewed what you wrote regarding the update of our ignarometric framework, and I think your proposal completely aligns with my own concerns regarding the use of the concept of learner. Let's have that update in place this year Ignarysis *issue. It is my cautious hope that this new framework, together with the charter, can serve as tools for those who view dialogic learning and pluralistic society as an interactive whole.*

Big kisses from Joana

Three days later Joana receives the following response from Greta:

Hi Aunt Joana.

Everything's going well. My belly is taking quite a beating from Sérgio-to-be. Yes, I'm now certain it's a boy. I think Mom is even more excited than I am about becoming a grandmother. She was a little jealous of you, with your grandchildren Paulo and Alexandra. I've agreed with Sérgio's dad that he'll get a Portuguese translation of your surname: so it'll be Sérgio Mestre.

Mom and I are very curious about the charter you're talking about. As soon as you have a first draft, you can send it to us. Meanwhile, Mom has probably already sent you her own draft of the new version of the ignarometric framework. I made some notes that she'll also send you, asking you to review everything and make any clarifications. There is a Ignarysis *issue planned for early December, where we'd like to include the framework. So, you should have the Charter of the Learner ready by mid-November. We hope to hear from you soon.*

Kissing from both of them.

Over the next few months, Sisters Demeester and Greta exchange a great deal of electronic correspondence. On September 13th, little Sérgio is born. Greta recovers quickly from the birth, and by mid-

October, the three researchers are busy discussing Joana's charter proposal, which would be published in the international journal *Learners Review* at the end of November 2045 with the title *Learning in a cooperative learning community and acting in a pluralistic society* [The full text of Joana's article is available in the JCD-Space]. In the introduction, Joana refers back to what she discussed with her sister and cousin and with a working group at her university. She then presents each term used and its definition within the context of this proposal. Finally, the text of the actual charter follows:

(Proposal for) Charter of the learner

We, as learners, interact with each other on the basis of learning projects co-authored and initiated within an existing or purpose-built learning community, guided by those who can make the connection with the existing knowledge needed to develop the learning project and who also consider themselves a learner within that learning community.

As learners, we strive to deepen a pluralistic and ecologically sustainable society, applying the following principles:

(1) We do not consider the evolution of society on our planet solely from a human perspective. Other living beings intervene to achieve a planetary ecological society. We agree to avoid any form of dogmatic and anthropomorphic thinking in the development of scientific knowledge.

(2) We note that a planetary and universal view of phenomena is only possible when we abandon the rigid defense of local cultural and other interests often incorporated into national curricula. For us, abandoning this means challenging two seemingly absolute convictions held by large segments of the population: the universal culture of assigning an absolute value of money and maintaining a kind of state of permanent war.

(3) We, as learners, believe that a pluralistic and ecologically sustainable society requires a cosmopolitan ethic. Therefore, we

believe that self-evaluation and the evaluation of relationships with others and with the observed environment must be approached holistically. This means that a cooperative approach is necessary for all available knowledge, and therefore that in a learning community, everyone is *author* and *learner* in other areas.

(4) As learners, we view primary school as a cultural starting point in which learners are encouraged to *cooperative* (work together) and wherein the dangers of *collaboration* (work for someone else) must be demonstrated. We consider a cooperative attitude a fundamental element for developing a pluralistic society.

(5) For primary schools that consider themselves adult-led learning communities for children, we propose the dialogical educational paradigm. We avoid normative diversification and expect educators to provide the necessary mediation to ensure that each member of the group continues to evolve through constant cross-functional interaction, without isolation or exclusion.

(6) As learners, we observe that a pluralistic, cooperative society employs different ethical standards than a democratic society based on majority decision-making. We consider that every learning community, whatever its underlying learning project is, continually practices pluralistic decision-making, supported by a cosmopolitan ethic. In this way, such a community gradually learns to avoid the ambiguous solutions of majority democracies such as integration, tolerance, and paternalistic pluralism.

The reactions to this charter proposal are not long in coming and are increasing rapidly as soon as the updated ignarometric framework 86/121 (*see annexes*) is published in *Ignarysis*.

Joana and Catherine are causing a storm of positive and negative criticism in the academic and political world for two reasons. They

explicitly link the concept of the learner in primary education to the communication paradigm and, in learning communities in general, to dialogic learning. Moreover, they clearly demonstrate the difference they believe exists between a pluralistic society and a democratic society.

The number of participants in the further development of the Charter of the Learner, or *Mathetic Charter* as some refer to it, is growing rapidly, and new learning communities and discussion forums are being created every day. These groups are being attacked in an increasingly threatening way by the same intolerant leaders who contributed to the end of parliamentary and representative democracy as initiated by European liberals in the 19th and 20th centuries AD. All this leads the Demeester sisters to create an ignarometric representation of society (*see annexes)* For the first time, they propose four quadrants with four utopian societal models. They speak of four type communities, assuming that it is obviously impossible to reduce the entire world population to the pure types of the framework. They also explain the term *apartment cat utopia*. That's a nod to George Glaeser, the founder of experimental mathematics didactics. At the end of the 20th century AD, he wrote that, strictly speaking, anyone who is ignorant of the outside world or not curious about it can go through life as a happy ignorant. Just like an *apartment cat.* Such a person doesn't need math, Gleaser concluded: food and drink on time, a good bed, and one can happily walk around in a protected environment…

When the hierarchically organized world specifically targets the proposed educational model for primary school children, it's clear to the Demeester sisters and Greta that those in power are indeed making a clear connection between the societal model and the educational paradigm. They would later write about this by stating that the instructional paradigm appears to be effective in encouraging a shift toward the totalitarian and apartment-house utopia. A combination of the instructional and learning paradigms

encourages a shift toward the nationalistic utopia. The cooperative, pluralistic utopia, in turn, appears to have been favourably stimulated by the communication paradigm.
Greta and Joana compile a list of what they consider desirable for a primary school committed to the Charter for Learners. They review pedagogues since the nineteenth century and reiterate their hope for replacing the passive relationship between listening children and narrating adults with an active relationship between children and adults, allowing for full experimentation. They point to the necessary 'instituing' function of a group, long championed by some pedagogues and anthropogogues and the need for a cooperative and flexible approach to learning projects. They consider the results of the projects themselves the object of evaluation, which does not require classification. They also reject any form of classification of children's learning relative to any standard.

Joana is very pleased with how both her sons are shaping themselves in the artistic world. Alexandre has inherited his mother's talent for observation. His most widely read works are the short story collections he now regularly publishes in three languages. He enjoys considerable popularity as a young writer. Last year, Manuela challenged him to tackle a play. He opted for a short humorous story with communication as its backdrop. He drew inspiration from Raymond Queneau's century-old book *Style Exercise*. He proposes a piece in which small changes in a conversation lead to major consequences. He draws on the experience of his mother and her colleague Ester to examine communication from different perspectives. Since the piece is conceived as a dialogue and features only two actors, Alexandre and Manuela decide to use one of the rooms in the Paulo Demeester library house as a small auditorium, seating a maximum of 25 spectators at each performance. This gives the performances a more intimate feel. Gradually, the conversations take on a more formal

role afterward, sometimes seeming to be part of the performance. When Francisco sees this, he asks his brother to rework the piece, incorporating some elements of discussion. He has a good idea for an operetta and incorporates the story into a larger work he envisions as a cosmopolitan symphony. He integrates folk instruments from different continents into a chamber orchestra. He asks Alexandre to emphasise cultural communication challenges in reworking the text. He discusses his ideas with his cousin Alan, who tells him about his grandfather's childhood friend, who is now considered an important innovator in symphonic and erudite music. Alan points out some links online, and a few days later Francisco receives a box of old Compact Disks at home, containing several works by Frank Nuyts, the composer in question.

A few months later, after the first performance of *Kosmophony,* the composer, not yet 26, says that the Belgian master became an important source of inspiration for him. Alexandre emails Greta about his brother's success. She replies Paulo's library contains numerous digital recordings of Frank Nuyts' work. She also announces that she will definitely be attending next spring semester and that she is making plans to move to Lisbon permanently in the following years.

But for the time being Greta is still on maternity leave and she makes room to proofread the short story *Sciences in the Universe.* She based this story on scraps from her grandfather's library. Together with Alexandre, she quickly understood that Paulo connected books of all kinds with a kind of invisible thread. You could even call them circles. The story came to her when she saw Greta Thunberg's little book *No one is too small to make a difference.* She recalls the conversation with Alexandre and Joan when discussing the advancing pandemics that are complicating travel plans as she continues reading…

… "I think about the warning from virologists that the gradual

disappearance of biodiversity and overpopulation are making the human species increasingly vulnerable to large-scale viral infections," says Joana. "Genetic manipulation to restore or rebuild ecosystems has so far caused more harm than it has provided solutions."

While listening to her aunt, Greta looks through her namesake's notebook and finds references to authors: Hogan, Simak, Sagan, Reeves, Eco, Harari. On the last page are two intersecting circles. One contains the names mentioned above, and the second contains the names Jacques Lecomte, Popper, Bachelard, and Jacquard. Foucault is positioned at the intersection. She shows the names to Joana and Alexandre, whereupon the latter suddenly says: "wait, I saw those names somewhere with book titles, in one of the notebooks we collected in that box."

After some searching, they find the book in question. Joana leafs through it, and then Alexandre points to a page. She reads aloud: '*After reading this book by Greta Thunberg, I was reminded of Harari's books, but also of Jacquard's. Not all turning points in history can be seen as progress; they are simply turning points, see* Homo sapiens. *I have to reread* Voice le Temps do Monde Fini. *And then Reeves too. I know Sagan almost by heart now, after my conversations with Alexandre about cosmos and black holes. Simak brought that SF story* Cosmic Engineers *where our universe is in danger of colliding with another universe. So he uses more than four dimensions and talks about some kind of primal energy, if I'm not mistaken. Reread it. And then you have Hogan's books, of course, the* Gentle Giant*s-series. The whole idea of a completely different history is fascinating. A story… Science in the universe, that might be a guiding principle… I could use Eco to discuss the arrogant nature of the leading and destructive human being, and how that leading human being ultimately arrogantly abandons the scientific path demonstrated by Popper and Bachelard, ultimately endangering humanity. Can I make Foucault's epistemes the guiding principle?*'."

“Did Grandpa ever write that story, Aunt?” asks Greta.
“I never found anything,” Joana replies, adding with a laugh, “but I never went through all the hard drives he kept.”
“Alexandre, would you mind giving me some tips as I write the story?”
“Yes cousin, do you have an idea?”
“I was thinking of Foucault’s three epistemes when he addresses post-medieval thinking in the West: a Renaissance episteme, a classicist episteme, and a modern episteme. In *Words and Things* he shows just like before in *History of Madness* two epistemic breaking points: that of the transition from the Renaissance to Classicism and then to modernity.”
“And you want to build a story on that?” asks Joana. “Won’t that be very difficult?”
“I was thinking more of a guideline. A story where a Renaissance thinker meets Harari’s *Sapiens*. Plenty of choice…*Sapiens* becomes a contemporary of Petrarch, a friend of Erasmus and More, a conversationalist with Bruno, Galileo, or Grotius… something like that. Sagan talks about the different modelling phases of the thinking about the cosmos; there are examples to be found there. And then back to Foucault: according to him, Renaissance thought is dominated by a cosmological vision of the world within which everything can be ordered. In this thinking, the search for similarity and analogies dominates. I can use that to create a kind of primitive link to Eco and Ur-fascism.”
“But with Galileo and his contemporaries you are right on top of that breaking point that Foucault places between Renaissance and Classicism, right?”
Yes, that breaking point is rather subtle. Order, identity, and difference determine the representation of the world. The logic of Port-Royal, Blaise Pascal, but also Descartes and Leibniz are the order of the day. We live in an age of mathematisation and mechanisation of nature. *Sapiens* discovers a universal language

with which a representation of the Cosmos can be made. It is the time of the encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert, which makes Foucault say in *Words and Things*: '*the calling of the classical language has always been to create an image: whether it be a natural discourse, a body of truth, a description of things, a corpus of exact knowledge, or an encyclopaedic dictionary'*. I could introduce other authors here besides the SF writers Grandpa refers to, starting with Cyrano de Bergerac and then Bellamy and Morris with *Looking backward* and *News from nowhere* to step up to make the transition to modernity with Wells and thus end up with Hogan and Simak."

"And your guideline?" asks Alexandre.

"Foucault inaugurates the episteme of modernity with Kant. Life, work, and language are themselves elements of study. And the evolving objects of knowledge are legion: in economics, production has replaced exchange, in biology, life has replaced living beings, and in philology, language has replaced discourse. In the modern episteme, the human sciences and *Sapiens* emerges as an object of knowledge. According to Foucault, these new sciences have changed in nature and form; this marks a true turning point. *Sapiens* as an object of study becomes an important epistemological question. Foucault discusses the ambiguous form of "anthropology", understood as a general, half-positivist, half-philosophical approach to "humanity", stating: '*In the analysis of finitude, man is a strange empirical-transcendental doublet*' For my story, Jacquard is now the logical source of inspiration with *La légende de demain, La légende de la vie, Le souci des pauvres* and *Moi et les autres*, all books present in this library. Reeves and Sagan bring us back to humanity in the cosmos."

"And since Foucault says that the human sciences have left the realm of philosophy, *Sapiens* can encounter Bachelard and Popper?" asks Joana.

"Yes, and I want to use another idea from Michel Foucault here. He assigns three domains to the human sciences: the psychological

realm, the sociological realm, and the realm of literature and myths. I can interweave literature and myths with Simak and Hogan, but also with Stephen Fry, who is also here. Daniel Arnaud and David Runciman can then make the connection to the end of democracy, and that ties in with what Foucault says about the human sciences tending toward mastery and yearning for the mask of power. Foucault develops the idea that knowledge is subordinate to power, which will lead him to abandon the concept of episteme.

"Great. You have Popper and Bachelard right where you want them. Popper with the evolution of science by detecting errors and trying to eliminate them, and Bachelard with the constructivist pedagogical approach, where he argues that experiences that refute previous ones can be interesting for evolving thought. You can also further develop Harari's reflection on money as the new religion and use some of Humberto Eco's ideas about totalitarian power," Joana notes."

"Yes," says Alexandre, "That really seems like the kind of story Grandpa would have had in mind, with his way of circling books and texts. *Science in the Universe.* I'll help you. The SF stories offer a critical perspective in the same style as the utopian writers you mentioned earlier. We do need to be a bit careful with James Hogan, though. As you know, Victor Hunt and Chris Danchecker are still leading that sometimes-maligned research regarding alien intelligence on Ganymede. Of course, James Hogan extrapolated their early work, just as you plan to do when you combine science and fiction."

"Yes, you'll help me with that," says Greta. "We can't mince our words. The idea is to show the danger of the rising totalitarian and intolerant attitudes toward science and critical thinkers, toward what you call the learner, Auntie—here Greta looks at Joana—but we have to make sure we don't endanger anyone. Ignorance leads to violence. We have to make it clear that we're writing fiction based on real situations…"

… Greta's thoughts had wandered to this conversation. She returns to today and thinks how that totalitarian attitude they want to point out has increased so much in just one generation. Grandpa saw *Science and Universe* as a kind of future story when he penned down his ideas around 2025. After all, he's referring to a conversation with Alexandre when he must have been about five or six years old. And now it's not a future story but a kind of novella set entirely in our time. She looks at Sérgio sleeping in his crib. And she thinks of her niece and nephew. What will the world look like in a generation?

Will the learners be able to hold their own?

Or will the ever-increasing arrogance and ignorance in our society silence them, as it did in centuries past?

The family still seems marginalised.

Greta tries to dispel the negative thoughts that arise and takes another look at the proofs before her.

End of book 09

Annexes

Bloombergscale in 2018 [OBJ]

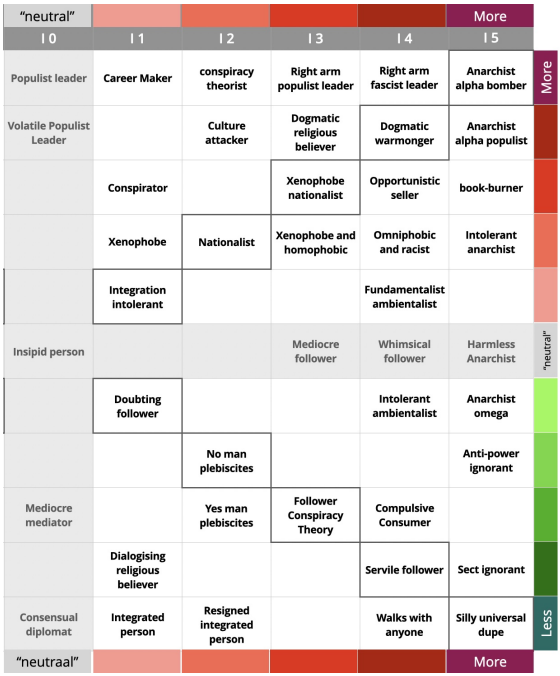
Your Net Worth Number

Your number	Bottom of your bracket	How many adults in the world are in your bracket	What you can afford	Who
-2	$0.01	1.5 billion	Very little. This category includes people with negative net worth. So you're either poor—or a rich person on a bad day, with liabilities exceeding your assets.	Subsistence farmer
-1	$0.10			
0	$1			
1	$10			
2	$100			
3	$1,000	1.7 billion	Cover small emergency without borrowing	Median American renter
4	$10,000	1.3 billion	New car	Median American family headed by someone with no college education
5	$100,000	436 million	Mortgage	Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (after a year or two on a congressional salary)
6	$1 million	40 million	Second home by the shore	Boris Johnson
7	$10 million	1.7 million	Third home wherever you want	Ginni Rometty
8	$100 million	49,000	Name on a college building	Rex Tillerson
9	$1 billion	2,700	Name on a college	Silvio Berlusconi
10	$10 billion	150	Sports team in major market	Elon Musk
11	$100 billion	2	Space travel, eradication of polio	Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates. Really, just those two.

Data: Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report 2018 for worth numbers -2 through 8. Bloomberg Billionaires Index for 9-11. Federal Reserve, Financial Samurai, Bloomberg Reporting, Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Ignorance / arrogance		Less				
		I -5	I -4	I -3	I -2	I -1
More	A 5	Fascist leader	Commercial researcher			Presumptuous Leader
	A 4	Sect leader	Strategic warmonger	Religious inquisitor		
	A 3	Particracy leader	Consumer trend creator	Aggressive warmonger		
	A 2	Liberal Democratic Leader			Dies for the fatherland	
	A 1	Leader Western Democracy	Tolerant ambientist		Critical voter	Critical follower
"neutral"	A 0	Democratic leader	Transition Leader	Mediocre leader		
	A -1	Consensual leader	Understanding ambientalist		Informed voter	Integration tolerant
	A -2	Anti-power intellectual			Active Integration Defender	
	A -3	Intellectual generalist	Conscious consumer	Paternalist pluralist	Conscience objector	
	A -4	Ethical Researcher	Consensual pluralist			
Less	A -5	Pluralist cosmopolitan ethics	Negotiating diplomat		Pacifist	
		Less				

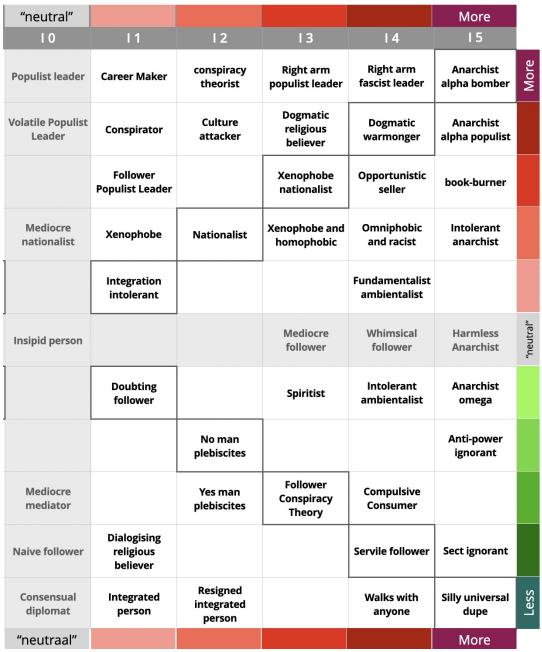
Framework 76/121 - Left side



FRAMEWORK 76/121 - RIGHT SIDE

Ignorance / arrogance		Less I -5	I -4	I -3	I -2	I -1
More	A 5	Fascist leader	Commercial researcher		Mercenary	Presumptuous Leader
	A 4	Sect leader	Strategic warmonger	Religious inquisitor	Hangman	
	A 3	Particracy leader	Consumer trend creator	Aggressive warmonger		
	A 2	Liberal Democratic Leader			Dies for the fatherland	
	A 1	Leader Western Democracy	Tolerant ambientist		Critical voter	Critical follower
"neutral"	A 0	Democratic leader	Transition Leader	Mediocre leader	Disciplined voter	
	A -1	Consensual leader	Understanding ambientalist	Legitimate Protector	Informed voter	Integration tolerant
	A -2	Anti-power intellectual			Active Integration Defender	
	A -3	Intellectual generalist	Conscious consumer	Paternalist pluralist	Conscience objector	
	A -4	Ethical Researcher	Consensual pluralist			Dialogising mystic
Less	A -5	Pluralist cosmopolitan ethics	Negotiating diplomat		Pacifist	
		Less				

Framework 86/121 - Left Side



FRAMEWORK 86/121 - RIGHT SIDE

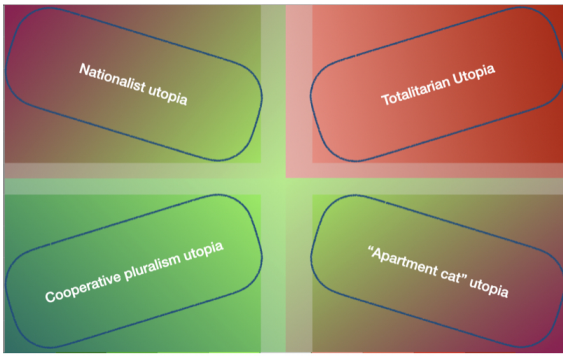


FIGURE 1. FOUR TYPE-UTOPIA

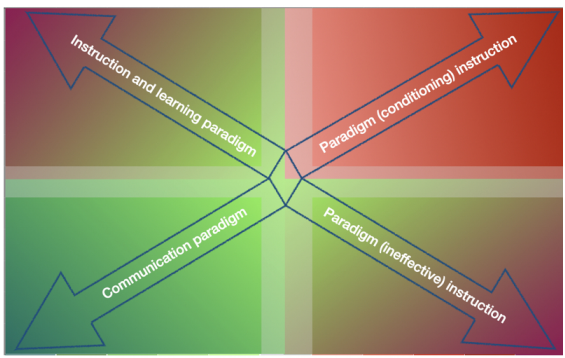


FIGURE 2. TYPE-STIMULI FOR LEARNING PROCESSES

A strange letter

Dear Pascal

We are taking advantage of small glitches in the space-time continuum to allow you to become a saga of educators, pedagogues, and anthropogogues. The saga was first published in 122.15 (Holocene calendar), which corresponds to the year 2215 according to the calendar you use in the 21st century.

The dynasty spans 20 generations, from 1630 to 2222 in your era.
When we studied your century in preparation for the work, we found your name and your interest in dialogical learning. That is why we kindly ask you to further disseminate the documents we send whenever we get the chance.

You can rest assured. The glitch in the continuum will have no impact on the past or future of living people. Only documents can be sent through it.

On behalf of the team of writers,

Maria Liber